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The African Catholic Church under the Vandals, 429-533.

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JONATHAN KENDALL PARSONS
THE AFRICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH UNDER
THE VANDALS, 429-533

Ph.D thesis

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THESIS ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the history of the African Catholic Church under Vandal domination (429-533). In the investigation of this subject three themes predominate; firstly, the relations between the Catholic Church and their new rulers, the Vandals, who were mainly Arian. While Gaiseric's conquest and his dominance of the western Mediterranean severed political relations between North Africa and the Roman Empire, the cultural and religious links between the Catholic Church in North Africa and the rest of the Roman Empire meant that the Catholic Church represented both an internal and, indirectly, an external threat to the stability of the Vandal kingdom. This thesis sets out to show that although the policy of all Vandal kings until Hilderic (523-30) was to persecute Catholics, the nature and extent of this persecution was often conditioned by domestic and external political factors. This is best seen in the case of the reign of Huneric (477-84).

The second theme is concerned with how the Church and its members reacted and responded to the conditions in which they found themselves. By looking in detail at Victor of Vita's *Historia Persecutionis*, the *Liber de Promissionibus Dei*, the works of Fulgentius and other writings, it can be seen that although there is an element of pessimism and self-reproachment in them, these works adopt an often virulent anti-Arian and -Vandal rhetoric and show a great concern for combatting Arian arguments as the essential means of maintaining faith and cohesion within the Catholic Church.

The third theme concerns the Church's fortunes as an institution and how it adapted in order to cope with changes in conditions which varied from region to region. It shows how circumstances in the Vandal period had exacerbated existing differences within the Catholic Church, but also how they had helped to prepare it to defend its integrity in opposition to imperial demands under Byzantine rule.

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ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations used for periodicals are in accordance with those used in *L'Année Philologique*. The following abbreviations will also be used:-

BEFAR	Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome.
Blockley	<i>The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus</i> (Liverpool, 1981-3).
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina</i> (Turnout, 1953-).
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum. Consilio et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae editum</i> (Berlin, 1863-).
Courtois	C. Courtois <i>Les Vandales et l'Afrique</i> (Algiers, 1955).
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> (Vienna, 1866-).
DHGE	<i>Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique</i> (Paris, 1912-).
FHG	<i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i> (Paris, 1841-84).
GCS	<i>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte</i> (Leipzig-Berlin, 1899-1975).
ILCV	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i>

- ed.E.Diehl 1 (Berlin, 1925).
- Isola** A.Isola *I cristiani dell'Africa vandalica nei sermones del tempo (429-534)* Edizioni Universitarie Jaca 74 (Rome, 1991).
- Lancel Actes** S.Lancel (ed.) *Actes de la conférence de Carthage en 411 1-4* = SC 194-6, 373 (Paris, 1972, 1991).
- Maier** J.-L.Maier *L'Episcopat de l'Afrique romaine, vandale et byzantine* Bibliotheca Helvetica Romana 11 (Rome, 1973).
- Mandouze** A.Mandouze *Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne (303-533)* Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire 1 (Paris, 1982).
- Mansi** J.-D.Mansi (ed.) *Sacrorum Conciliorum Omnium Nova et Amplissima Collectio* (Venice, 1759-98).
- MGH** *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* ed. Societas Aperiendis Fontibus Rerum Germanicarum
a.a. = *Auctores Antiquae* (Berlin, 1878-1919).
s.r.m. = *Scriptores Rerum Merovingiarum* (Berlin, 1885-1920).
- Notitia** *Notitia Provinciarum et Civitatum Africae* MGH
a.a.3.1 ed.C.Halm (Berlin, 1879) 63-71.
- Passio Septem Martyrum** *Passio Beatissimorum Martyrum* MGH a.a.3.1
ed.C.Halm (Vienna, 1879) 59-62.
- Pewesin** W.Pewesin *Imperium, Ecclesia Universalis, Rom. Der Kampf des afrikanischen Kirche um die Mitte des 6. Jahrhunderts* Forschungen zur Kirchen- und

- Geistesgeschichte 11 (Stuttgart, 1937).
- PG *Patrologiae Cursus Completus Omnium SS. Patrum, Doctorum, Scriptorumque Ecclesiasticorum. Series Graeca* ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1857-66).
- PL *Patrologiae Cursus Completus Omnium SS. Patrum, Doctorum, Scriptorumque Ecclesiasticorum. Series Latina* ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1878-90).
- PLRE J. R. Martindale (ed.) *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* 2 (Cambridge, 1980).
- PLS *Patrologiae Latinae Supplementum* ed. A. Hamman (Paris, 1958-).
- Procopius *Wars* Procopius *History of the Wars, Books III and IV* tr. H. B. Dewing vol. 2 (London-New York, 1916), page numbers in brackets.
- RE *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* ed. G. Wissowa et al. (Stuttgart-Munich, 1894-1972).
- SC *Sources Chrétiennes* (Paris, 1947-).
- Thiel A. Thiel (ed.) *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum Genuinae et quae ad eos scriptae sunt a S. Hilario usque ad Pelagium II* 1 (Brunsberg, 1868).
- VF G.-G. Lapeyre (ed.) *Ferrand. Vie de saint Fulgence de Ruspe* (Paris, 1929).
- (Roman numerals following VF refer to the introduction. Arabic numerals refer to the chapter and sentence according to the divisions

and punctuation employed by Lapeyre followed by the page number in brackets).

Victor

Victor of Vita *Historia Persecutionis Africanae Provinciae* MGH a.a.3.1 ed.C.Halm (Berlin, 1879).
See also CSEL 7 ed. M.Petschenig (Vienna, 1881),
an edition composed independently and
simultaneously.

Foreword

I should like to thank Professor Averil Cameron without whose prolonged professional and moral support this thesis would never have been completed. I should also like to thank Miss Brenda Bolton for her help and advice over the years. Also indispensable has been the support of my parents, my brothers and sister and my friend, Ruth. They have contributed in innumerable ways. I hope this is a just reward for their patience. Finally, I should like to thank my friends from Carus-Wilson Hall for all their help.

I should also like to thank the British Academy for providing me with a Major State Studentship and the British School at Rome for giving me a three-month Grant in Aid of Research which allowed me to pursue my research in the libraries and archives of Rome.

Translations from the Latin are my own unless otherwise stated.

Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the history of the African Catholic Church under Vandal domination (429-533) - how it fared under the mainly Arian, Vandals, to what degree and in what way it survived under their regime, and how it reacted and responded to the changed circumstances in which it found itself. When referring to the African Catholic Church and its fate, I am primarily considering it as an institution and organisation; hence there is an emphasis on the Church hierarchy, about which, anyway, we are much better informed than we are about the Catholic laity. I use the term Church to denote a collective body of Christians with a common creed and with an organisation which extends beyond the local level. It is, of course, impossible to dissociate the institution on the human level from the way in which leaders and members of the Church conceived of its purpose and nature. The way in which the Church and its destiny are conceived differently under different conditions, for instance in its relations to those outside it, its relations with the secular power, and the stage it is considered to have reached in the divine scheme of things, are as much a part of its history as are the vicissitudes of its organisational structure. Naturally there is a close relation between the fortune of the Church and the way it is perceived.

This topic has never hitherto been investigated as a whole and in detail. This is perhaps not surprising, considering that the primary sources which can help us to understand this subject are few, and that nearly all those that survive adopt a similar strongly pro-Catholic and anti-Arian and anti-Vandal bias. To illustrate this point, the main

sources that will be used are firstly, a collection of Catholic sermons, the *Liber de Promissionibus et Praedicationibus Dei*, which considered the Arians to represent Antichrist, and a number of anti-Arian tracts. Secondly, there is Victor of Vita's *Historia Persecutionis Africanae Provinciae*, whose virulently anti-Vandal inclination can be discerned from its very name. Thirdly, there is the *Notitia Provinciarum et Civitatum Africae*, which purports to be a list of bishops who attended the conference in 484 called by the Vandal king Huneric (477-484). This source, if used carefully, gives us some insight into the state of the Catholic Church around this time.

Fourthly, we have the *Vita Fulgentii*, a hagiographical work written about the monk, theologian and church leader, bishop Fulgentius of Ruspe, which is very much centred on the activities of the hero. Though this work appears to have been written at the time of the Byzantine reconquest (533) or soon after, Fulgentius himself was very much concerned with opposing Arianism, and this is reflected in the bias of the *Vita*. In combination with this source we have the various writings of Fulgentius himself. A good part of these writings are given over to combatting Arianism, defending the Catholic faith and informing others of how this should be done, though they also deal with many other religious topics. The final main source is the acts of the Council of Carthage of 525, which concerned itself with the reconstruction of the organisation and discipline of the Catholic Church from 523, when the Vandal king Hilderic allowed the Catholics freedom to worship and to organise themselves.

Despite their biases, then, these main sources, can inform us about a variety of aspects of the Catholic Church, if balanced, tempered and supported by other sources available to us. However we should remember that our surviving sources are like islands in a large sea of ignorance. Despite the existence of several minor sources which help to extend, confirm or modify the information the main sources give us, our investigation of the topic rarely allows us to draw any firm conclusions. It is often only possible to make tentative observations which cannot be used to support further conclusions. The fact that our sources are nearly all pro-Catholic means that we rarely get an insight into Vandal and Arian motives.

Fortunately, our main sources are not monolithic in their anti-Arian rhetoric. For instance, in needing to show how great the Arian danger was to Catholics, Victor and others had to point out that many Catholics had given into temptation. The collection of Catholic sermons that we possess considers the different possible reactions of their audience to the perceived Arian menace and in doing so no doubt reflects attitudes their writers had probably heard, some of them negative, towards this supposed threat. We can discern from the sources, times and places when there was no persecution or where it was only spasmodic. The main sources themselves, despite their biases, occasionally then allow us to see behind the rhetoric the kind of compromises with the desires of the secular power which must have been common, but which are rarely given voice.

The other sources which sometimes impinge upon the subject under investigation are varied. None, however, are written from a pro-Vandal point of view, except for some of the poems of the *Anthologia Latina*, which praise aspects of civic renovation undertaken by Vandal kings and reflect some of the more pleasant aspects of life under the Vandals, such as the forms of entertainment available in the capital, Carthage.¹ While these poems in most cases only give us an insight into the lifestyle of the fortunate few, they are a useful palliative to the grim picture of persecution which many of the pro-Catholic sources give. Salvian of Marseilles, though a Catholic monk, writing in the 440's expressed positive attitudes about the Vandals as instruments of God's wrath in his *De Gubernatione Dei* and condemned the sinfulness of the population of Carthage.²

We have a number of brief and pithy references to events in Africa in this period in some of the contemporary and later Latin chronicles written in Africa and abroad, such as that of Prosper of Aquitaine which exhibits the kind of anti-Vandal and anti-Arian biases we find in our African sources. There are also a few relevant references in the *Chronicon* of Marcellinus Comes and that of Victor of Tonnena, written by an African in the 560's but informing us about some events in the Vandal period. There is also the *Laterculus Regum Vandalorum*, a Vandal king list which has some useful insertions telling us about the Catholic Church in the reigns of Gunthamund (484-496) and Thrasamund (496-523). There are also a few papal letters which show concern about developments in the African Church casting light on relations between the Church in Africa and the Church of Rome and those of the eastern

provinces. The *De Viris Illustribus* of Gennadius, a priest of Marseilles and his continuator, pseudo-Gennadius, compiled in the mid to late fifth century, tells us about African Catholic writers about whom we would otherwise be ignorant. The Gallic Catholic bishop Gregory of Tours' *Historia Francorum*, written in the late sixth century, is another example of a source which provides us with a few details which help to cast a little light on the general picture of the African Church in the Vandal period.

Contemporary and slightly later Greek historians also inform us about some events pertaining to our subject. Some surviving fragments of the historian Malchus concerning events in the 470's and written not long after (probably in the reign of Emperor Anastasius (491-518)), tell us about diplomatic relations between the Byzantine Empire and the Vandal kingdom which help us to understand how the wider political scene in the Mediterranean affected Vandal policy towards the Catholic Church in Africa, though they tell us little directly about the Church.³

Procopius' *History of the Wars*, finished in AD 553/4, is mainly concerned about the Byzantine reconquest of Africa from the Vandals but also gives a brief historical overview of the Vandal period as he knew it. Procopius' viewpoint is fairly detached, referring to the 'Libyans', that is the Romano-Africans, as 'they', showing little interest in them.⁴ His information on the imperial attempts to recover Africa in the mid-fifth century is useful, though some of this information was derived from slightly earlier Greek historians such as Priscus, another fifth-century historian from the east whose work only survives in later

epitomisations.⁵ Procopius' historical knowledge often tallies with that of other sources; for instance he states that Huneric persecuted the Catholics more than Gaiseric, as suggested by the African writers, Victor of Vita and Victor of Tonnena.⁶ Procopius is useful in the additional detail he provides and also for information about events such as Moorish invasions about which we would otherwise be ignorant.

This thesis is concerned primarily with the literary evidence for the history of the African Catholics in the Vandal period. Hence, except where there is some degree of certainty about the nature and dating of evidence and where that evidence corroborates the literary sources, I have relied upon written rather than archaeological evidence. This is firstly because a consideration of the archaeological evidence for the Vandal period would require a thesis of its own. One reason for this is because of the problems of dating church-building, for instance, precisely to the Vandal period. Noël Duval, for example, in his *Les églises africaines à deux absides. Recherches archéologiques sur la liturgie chrétienne en Afrique du Nord* BEFAR 218 and 218 bis (Paris, 1971-3), rarely dares to date a building or phase of building more precisely than to, say, the fifth century, which is not precise enough to allot it to the Vandal period. Even in the very rare cases where a building can be dated (such as in the case of the church at El Gousset which we can tell from a recently discovered inscription was repaired in 522) it is not possible to tell whether it was used by Catholics or Arians.' As John Humphrey has written concerning the excavations that have taken place in many parts of Carthage 'the types of evidence

[archaeological and literary] are running parallel but rarely overlap or complement each other with great clarity or precision'.*

There are many problems with the limitations the sources impose. For instance, often the only means available for identifying a sermon of the Vandal period are references to persecution by Arians and barbarians. This, of course, has the effect of perpetuating the image of the Catholic Church as being overwhelmingly concerned about persecution and combatting Arianism. It has been shown, most recently by Antonino Isola in his work *I Cristiani dell'Africa vandalica nei Sermones del tempo (429-534)* (Rome, 1990) that, even within such sermons, there are references to non-polemical religious and pastoral matters of concern to clergy and congregations in the Catholic Church. However, of those sermons deemed to date from the Vandal period by the above author, it is still the theme of persecution that predominates.*

It would, however, be hard to deny, considering the surviving output of African anti-Arian literature from this period, that the combatting of Arianism was a major, if not the major, preoccupation of African Catholic churchleaders of this age. Fortunately even our pro-Catholic sources do inform us of periods when persecution was in abeyance and concessions were made to the Catholic Church, and it is one of the contentions of this thesis that while certain areas suffered badly from persecution, others suffered only spasmodically and selectively, allowing some continuation of normal church functioning. There is no doubt that the everyday pastoral duties of explaining the doctrines of the Church, expounding the Scriptures and exhorting members

of the congregation to live Christian lives must have continued where they could. Unfortunately, we are badly informed about the development of doctrines in this period, in areas other than Trinitarian doctrine. From what we can tell about this and other areas of Christian teaching, it was as much as leaders of the Church could do to hand on the teachings of the Church as they had been handed down to them from more peaceful and productive generations, the teachings of Augustine of Hippo being held in particular reverence. It was in the area of anti-Arian argument where new writings were clearly most needed.

Considering the problems inherent in tackling the subject under investigation it is, perhaps not surprising that no detailed study has been undertaken of the subject as a whole. In contrast, we are much better informed about the preceding period, and quite well informed about the subsequent period. The Vandal period itself has often been viewed either as an epilogue to the great age of Augustine, bishop of Hippo and Aurelius, bishop of Carthage, or, sometimes, as a prelude to the period of the Three Chapters controversy in the 550's. Our greater knowledge of the preceding and succeeding period, can be used to help us discern themes which recur and changes which occur in the Vandal period.

There have been several useful studies on subjects which impinge upon the topic under consideration: for example, Werner Eck's 'Der Episkopat im spätantiken Afrika: organisatorische Entwicklung, soziale Herkunft und öffentliche Funktionen', *Historische Zeitschrift* 235 (1983) 265-295; and Serge Lancel's, 'L'originalité de la province ecclésiastique de Byzacène' *CT* 12 (1964) 139-154. There are also many

articles dealing with some aspect of one of the main sources, for instance, Luigi Alfonsi, '*L'Historia persecutionis Africanæ provinciae* di Vittore Vitense, ovvero il rifiuto di un ipocrita rinunciatarismo velleitario: «Romani» e «Barbari»' *Gymnasium Siculorum* 16 (1978) 1-18 and Manlio Simonetti, 'Note sulla Vita Fulgentii', *Analecta Bollandiana* 100 (1982) 277-289.

In addition there are some important monographs dealing with the writing or writings of one author, in particular Christian Courtois, *Victor de Vita et son oeuvre* (Algiers, 1954) and on Fulgentius, G.G.Lapeyre, *Saint Fulgence de Ruspe: un évêque catholique sous la domination vandale* (Paris, 1929); also H.-J.Diesner, *Fulgentius von Ruspe als Theologe und Kirchenpolitiker* (Halle-im-Saal, 1966). It seems timely to bring together the fruits of these detailed works in order to try to create the larger picture of the African Catholic Church in this period.

Several scholars have included chapters or overviews on the Catholic Church in the Vandal period in works dedicated to broader themes to which this subject has a relevance, such as C.Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (Algiers, 1955) and, on a different level, J.Cuoq's *L'église chrétienne en Afrique de la seconde au douzième siècle* (Paris, 1984). These writers have tended to be preoccupied with judging how violent the Vandals were and how much the Catholics really suffered. Hence Catholic writers such as Lapeyre, Cuoq and Isola have tended generally to accept the claims of the Catholic writers of the time such as Victor of Vita. Other writers such as Courtois and Diesner in being

sympathetic to the 'Vandal' position, have stressed the political and economic motives underlying actions which contemporary writers viewed from a religious point of view.¹⁰

It is, of course, hard to break out of the moralistic mould in which our information about the relations between the Vandal king and the Catholic Church is presented. Though this thesis will, of course, consider to what extent the Catholic Church suffered, what is perhaps of more interest is to discern why the Vandals acted as they did towards the Catholics and in what context.

My approach to the sources is firstly that they are themselves an important expression of the reaction of Catholic churchleaders to Vandal rule; thus they are evidence of communication of a rhetoric of resistance and at the same time the means of conveying to coreligionists possible ways of reacting and responding to the situation in which the Catholics found themselves.

My second approach to the evidence is that, when the rhetoric, *topoi*, exaggeration and generalisations are stripped away, there is often a core of truth in the admittedly biased sources that are available to us. Indeed, events and circumstances would naturally have been very influential in determining the choice of *topoi*. Wherever possible, I shall try to discern and demonstrate the factual basis of the evidence. To do this, it is necessary to understand the literary sources from within.

Naturally the problem with any source is what it fails to tell us. This, of course, can only sometimes be rectified by recourse to other evidence. For instance, though we have the *Vita Fulgentii*, it only really informs us about events and developments in the Church which were relevant to Fulgentius' life. We cannot rely upon it to give us a clear insight into the history of the Church in his time. However important Fulgentius was in the Church, he was not involved in every aspect of it.

Unfortunately, there is very little chronological overlap between our two main sources, Victor's *Historia Persecutionis* and the *Vita Fulgentii*, which would allow us to test one against the other. Furthermore, one is a work of history, while the other is a hagiographical work centred on one person, though Victor's preoccupation with persecution can at least partly be explained by the fact that he was writing at a time when he considered persecution to be at its height. By contrast, we cannot easily tell whether monasticism, with which the *Vita Fulgentii* was much concerned, was of such great importance in the period before Fulgentius, or even outside the province of Byzacena in Fulgentius' time.

We are naturally restricted by the contents of the available sources in the aspects of the history of the Catholic Church under the Vandals into which we can inquire. Nevertheless, the preoccupations of the sources allow us to be informed fully enough to gain some understanding of the following three areas germane to this topic. Firstly, we are given some insight into the relations between the Vandal king, his government and his Arian Church, and the Catholic Church. We

can also glimpse the ways in which this relationship was affected by political and other circumstances, both inside and outside the Vandal kingdom.

The second theme concerns the way in which the Church and its members reacted and responded to the conditions in which they found themselves. Our main evidence for this is in literary form. It becomes clear that written and spoken responses to the Vandals were one of the most important means left to leaders of the Catholic Church to resist the forces which sought to destroy the Catholic Church and all it meant in terms of identity for those who belonged to it. Regrettably there has not been space to expand on how the concept of martyrdom was used in this period. The third main subject about which the sources inform us is about the Church's fortunes as an institution: how it adapted in order to cope with the conditions in which it found itself.

At first sight, it may appear to be more logical to look at these themes separately. However, in practice it has proven difficult and indeed, undesirable, to dissociate them entirely. For instance, when evaluating the sources and considering the way in which they help us to understand how members of the Church reacted to the conduct of the Vandals, it is impossible to ignore the historical context and the relations between the Vandals and the Catholic Church. Likewise, it is impossible to understand the historical background without understanding the bias and purpose of the sources which inform us about it.

This thesis is therefore centred around the main sources, which are dealt with in chronological order. This allows us to view the themes mentioned in a historical perspective. As will be seen, one theme usually dominates each chapter.

After a chapter on the history of the African Church up to the Vandal invasion, the second chapter deals with the creation of the Vandal kingdom under King Gaiseric (429-477), and the establishment of an Arian Church under him, its nature and its challenge to the Catholic Church. This chapter draws on Victor of Vita's work for the general background, and particularly for information on Gaiseric's measures towards the Catholic Church. However, many other sources and types of evidence allow us to fill in the gaps to some degree and give Victor's information a more meaningful context.

If the second chapter is primarily concerned with the relationship between the Vandals and the Catholic Church, the third is concerned with the reactions and responses of members of that Church to the establishment of the Vandal kingdom in Africa. This chapter draws on a number of Catholic sermons, the *Liber Promissionibus* and some anti-Arian tracts written in Gaiseric's time.

The fourth chapter deals with Victor of Vita's *Historia Persecutionis*, investigating its authorship and the ingrained bias within it and also its trustworthiness or the opposite. As well as considering Victor's particularly extreme reaction towards the persecution during the reign of King Huneric (477-484), we can discern

the difficult conditions in which the work was produced. The fifth chapter draws mainly on Victor, but balances his account with other evidence; it discusses our historical record of Huneric's reign, looking firstly at how the political situation outside Africa affected Huneric's policy towards the African Church, and secondly how circumstances within Africa helped to bring about a change in policy from toleration of the Catholic Church to very harsh persecution.

These sources so far considered do, of course, touch upon how the organisation of the Church was affected by Vandal attitudes towards the Catholic Church, but because of their predominantly plaintive tone they usually only tell us of their negative effects upon the Church's organisation. Henceforth our sources are more informative about how the Church fared as an institution; indeed, this theme dominates the rest of the thesis. Thus because of the nature of the sources as well as the chronological treatment adopted, it effectively falls into two parts.

The sixth chapter forms a transition between the two halves since it deals with the *Notitia Provinciarum*, a Catholic episcopal list compiled some time before the conference of Carthage called by Huneric in 484. If the *Notitia* is accepted as reasonably trustworthy, it can be used to tell us the state of the episcopal college of the Catholic Church province by province. It can also be used to help us understand how Victor used the information that he gives us.

Chapter seven investigates the contribution of Fulgentius towards the Catholic Church. It first considers the *Vita Fulgentii* as a

source and the monastic background to Fulgentius' life as a church leader. Secondly, there is a background section on the Catholic Church in the province of Byzacena whence Fulgentius came. The next section looks at the ways in which Fulgentius' written and spoken eloquence helped to inform and unite the Catholic Church. The final section investigates the debate between Fulgentius and the Arian king Thrasamund (496-523), showing how he responded to the Arian challenge headed by the king himself.

The final chapter looks into what the acts of the Council of Carthage of 525 can tell us about conditions within the Church before that time and how the Council sought to resolve the organisational and disciplinary problems which it inherited. This chapter also looks forward to the Three Chapters controversy of the 550's in order to help to put into perspective some developments within the African Church in the Vandal period which contributed towards the opposition of the African Church to the decrees of the emperor in Byzantium, at the same time underlining some recurring motifs in the history of the African Church.

INTRODUCTION NOTES

- 1) M. Rosenblum *Luxorius: A Latin Poet among the Vandals* (New York, 1962); F.M. Clover 'Carthage and the Vandals' in J.H. Humphrey (ed.) *Excavations at Carthage 1978 conducted by the University of Michigan VII* (Ann Arbor, 1982) 8-22.
- 2) Salvian *De Gubernatione Dei* 7.11.49-13.56, SC 220 ed. J. Lagarrigue (Paris, 1975) 464-70.
- 3) See e.g. Blockley 1 71-85.
- 4) See Averil Cameron *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (London, 1985) 171-87, esp. 186.
- 5) Blockley 1 115-6.
- 6) See ch. 4, esp. n. 95.
- 7) N. Duval 'Les nouveautés de l'archéologie tunisienne. Le site d'Henchir el Gousset' *REA* 36 (1990) 323-4.
- 8) J.H. Humphrey 'Vandal and Byzantine Carthage' in J.D. Pedley ed. *New Light on Ancient Carthage* (Ann Arbor, 1980) 85.
- 9) Isola 25-67.
- 10) E.g. Courtois 286-93; H.-J. Diesner 'Sklaven und Verbannte: Martyren und Confessoren bei Victor Vitensis' *Philologus* 106 (1962) 101-20.

CHAPTER 1

Historical introduction: the African Church up to the Vandal invasion.

To introduce the subject I shall look first at the history of the African Church before the arrival of the Vandals in Africa (429). This is worth doing for three reasons: firstly to provide a general background, secondly because many themes and characteristics developing within the Church at this time re-emerge and recur during the period of Vandal rule. Thirdly, we are well-informed about the preceding forty years or so before the Vandal invasion, whereas during the Vandal period itself our information is sparser and more lacunose. I shall look then, in the introduction, first at the way the African 'Catholic' Church defined itself both against its main opponents, the Donatists, and also in relation to other Churches throughout the Roman Empire and in relation to the Empire itself; and then at the situation of the African Church at the time of the Vandal invasion.

In 314, Constantine, the first emperor to support the Christians, supported the decision of the synod of Arles in favour of Caecilian as bishop of Carthage against his rival Mensurius. The Donatists, as they came to be known, supporters of Donatus (Mensurius' successor) opposed Caecilian on the grounds that one of his ordinators was a *traditor* - one who had handed over the Scriptures during the recent persecutions.' In adopting this attitude, the Donatists considered themselves to be true heirs to the Church of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage and martyr in the persecutions in 259. He had considered

that the unity of the true and pure Church was to be found in the community of the baptised. Sinful clergy (such as *traditores*) should not dispense the sacraments as their impurity would pollute them.² Those who had been baptised outside the true Church and wished to enter it had to be rebaptised for this reason. So too had apostates who had lapsed during persecution. Cyprian admitted there would be tares amongst the wheat and that they should be tolerated,³ but also that the closed, pure, holy Church of the Martyrs should be maintained.⁴ What is more, 'Since the days of Tertullian and Cyprian, African Christians had come to think of the Church as standing over against an alien and hostile world. In the third century, persecution gave this imagery a reality'.⁵

The Donatists then, when confronted by imperial support for Christians, characteristically sought to preserve their purity and integrity by rejecting this supposedly worldly contamination. While the Catholic Church (as the official Church considered itself) gained imperial patronage and support and contact with transmarine Churches, the Donatists continued to consider themselves as the Church of the Martyrs.⁶ In so doing they seem to have gained the support of a substantial part of the African Church.

The Christian Church in Africa at the time of the Diocletianic persecution was one of the most developed in the Roman Empire. It was apparently the only Church in the west to have penetrated substantially into the countryside, and it seems to have struck deep roots in the plains of Numidia, in particular - an area destined to be the heartland of the Donatist Church.⁷ In 256, Cyprian could call a Council to which

eighty-five bishops came. The Church in Africa was always to have a higher density of bishoprics than Churches elsewhere and to stress the importance of episcopal collegiality as well as hierarchy.⁸ The Donatist Church embedded itself in local communities precisely by allowing small towns, rural settlements and powerful local landowners the prestige of having their own bishop.⁹ In the Donatist Church seniority of holding of office gave preeminence.¹⁰

The Catholic Church developed only slowly in the fourth century. It was closely dependent on imperial ecclesiastical politics, first adopting the creed and canons of the Council of Nicaea and later being cajoled into briefly accepting the semi-Arian creed suggested to the Council of Rimini in 359 by Constantius II.¹¹ The Donatists noticeably also followed the Nicæan Creed in Trinitarian matters apart from a rapprochement with the Arians by Donatus himself in the 340's.¹² Though most emperors supported the Catholic clergy, giving them land, privileges and access to court and building churches, few were prepared to use sustained force against the Donatists, for in creating martyrs, they only helped to perpetuate the Donatists' own identity and integrity.

There were good political reasons not to alienate the Donatists amongst whom were many figures influential in Africa.¹³ If the Donatists had an important following amongst the less Romanised Moorish population, many of their leaders resided in thoroughly Roman towns like Tingad. The Donatists numbered amongst their leaders ex-lawyers and ex-grammarians much the same as the Catholics. Latin was the language of

the Holy Book, and hence of sermon and liturgy amongst both professions, and with the competition between them a Latin religious culture must now have spread more widely and deeply than any Latin culture had done hitherto.¹⁴

The Catholics were strongest in the towns and the most romanised areas like Proconsularis.¹⁵ However, Donatists appear to have been numerous in both town and country.¹⁶ The Catholic Church was inclined to attract those who would wish to identify themselves with the imperial power and opportunists who sought favour thereby.¹⁷ It did still, no doubt, also attract genuinely devout people like Augustine's mother Monica.

The Catholic Church too had its strengths. Where the Donatists were limited only to Africa, the Catholics claimed their Church to be *ecclesia toto orbe diffusa*.¹⁸ The African Catholic Church was, in theory at least, in communion with Christian Churches in all parts of the Empire (though the strength of Arianism had at times vitiated this). Such communion was what gave it its *unitas* and the unanimity and concord between its parts gave it its *pax* - two important characteristics claimed by the Catholic Church - though this might be at the price of imperial interference. Donatists defined their *unitas* as consisting in all those whom they felt had valid baptism while African Catholic bishops such as Optatus of Milev and Augustine of Hippo took as axiomatic Paul's profession (Ephesians 4.5) 'One God, one Christ, one faith, one baptism'.¹⁹ To repeat one, as the Donatists did, was to divide the others. The worldwide extent of the Catholic Church was often

used as an *ipso facto* argument against the provincial limitations of the Donatist Church.²⁰ Baptism could exist outside the Church, but salvation and eternal life could only be found within the Catholic Church.²¹

With the accession of Emperor Theodosius I (379-395), the Catholic Church in Africa began to come into its own. This period saw a heightened religious fervour and sense of urgency across the Empire, sometimes tinged with an apocalyptic mood. Along with it went an increasing religious intolerance against non-orthodox Christians, pagans and Jews. This ran in conjunction with what is known as the Theodosian settlement. Theodosius had Arianism, the creed that had dogged the unity of the imperial Church since Nicaea, proscribed. He brought in and enforced laws confiscating the means of worship of pagans and heretics and extending civic disabilities to them. There was to be only one, Catholic Church in the Empire.

Many Christians came to believe they had entered a new divinely-ordained age, the *tempora christiana*, in which the Christian Church became synonymous with the world - the Roman Empire. Some saw this as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies and believed that the return of Christ would be preceded by the coming of Antichrist.²² When the Church did indeed become the *ecclesia toto orbe diffusa* Christ's mission would be fulfilled. This atmosphere was at its height around AD 400, when there were energetic moves to suppress paganism. Theologians in the east had for some time begun to formulate the idea that God sanctioned the formation of the Roman Empire so that the apostles could 'Go and teach all nations'. Eusebius of Caesarea had seen the

Constantinian monarchy as representing such a unification of Church and Empire and, influenced by Hellenistic ideas of kingship, he represented the emperor as the friend of the Logos and his Empire as the image of Christ's kingdom. Ecclesiastics in the west, though more restrained about the special role of the emperor and stressing their own hierocratic role as his advisers, were often ready to accept this idea of the Empire as a vehicle of salvation with a divine mission in history.

This wave of triumphalism seems to have coincided with, and been an essential support to, a movement of reform within the African Catholic Church, challenged as it was by the Donatist Church. This reform movement and its success owed a great deal to two men in particular - Aurelius, bishop of Carthage c.393-427 and Augustine, bishop of Hippo 395-430. Aurelius called frequent councils of the African Catholic Church and was thereby the principal architect of an extensive framework of canon law regulating the conduct and standards of the African Catholic clergy in an attempt to raise it above the criticisms of the Donatist Church. New regulations were formulated as new situations arose such as the absorption of the Donatists into the Catholic Church in the early fifth century to be described later. They came to cover a whole variety of eventualities in the field of ecclesiastical discipline. This was the most extensive body of canon law of any provincial Church in the west at the time and was influential in east and west long after the demise of Christianity in North Africa. Aurelius' ability at legal drafting, guiding and controlling petitions and managing the Councils is clear.²³

By the beginning of the fifth century the structure of the African Catholic Church was set, with provinces corresponding more or less to the civil provinces, each with its order of seniority and own primate. The exception was the province of Proconsularis, where its leading bishop, that of Carthage, was elected by the clergy and people of Carthage but was also the primate of the whole African Church, with the prerogative of calling general councils and a general responsibility for the whole Church within Africa.

The African Catholics, like the Donatists, had avoided a structured hierarchy with a metropolitan tier such as was found in the east and increasingly in the west. The principle of seniority, which went back at least to the third century, meant that the primate of a province would not reside in a fixed see but would alternate according to who was the longest serving bishop at any given time. This also meant that the leading bishop of each province would, no doubt, be advanced in age, particularly in provinces with numerous bishops.

Like the Donatist Church, the Catholic Church came to have a high density of bishoprics and this meant a stress on episcopal collegiality with the primate as *primus inter pares*.²⁴ Provincial Councils also seem to have become common between 400 and 420.²⁵ The strength of the organisation and sense of tradition that grew up in the Catholic Church in this period and the high degree of self-regulation, led to an emphasis on the African Church's identity and judicial autonomy within the organisation of the Catholic Church as a whole.

A good example of the African Church's self-assertion is provided by its relations with the Roman Church, well typified by the Apiarius affair which took place between 419 and 426. The bishops of Rome were claiming the right to judge appeals made against judgements passed in Africa following the claim of the African priest Apiarius. They considered they had a basis in the Nicaean canons. The African Church, however, sent to the Churches of Constantinople and Alexandria for authentic copies of the canons, on account of which the Roman Church was shown to have a specious claim.²⁶ The superiority of the authority of councils of bishops, especially general ones, over the judgement of any individuals (such as the Pope) was to be emphasised in the address of the African Council to Pope Celestine in 424. Such an authority clearly stemmed from the importance which the African Catholics placed on their own councils²⁷ and from the idea that large numbers of bishops in Council were more likely to interpret the divine will through the Holy Spirit than one individual.²⁸

The bishops of Rome seem to have taken heed of this lesson. The affair was settled in the Africans' favour and Apiarius admitted to the charges against him. Future bishops of Rome would continue to interpret the Petrine commission as applying specifically to the see of Rome and only through this to other priests. It is, however, significant that when an appeal was made from the Church in Mauretania to Pope Leo I (440-461) in 446, his approach was tactful and advisory not juridical.²⁹

Augustine later in his life came to believe that the ecclesiology of the Catholica was founded on universal communion with

all other apostolic Churches; not merely Rome, but also Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch and Ephesus and through them all Catholic Churches.³⁰ Peter, in accordance with Matt.16:18-9, represented and personified the whole Church which had received the power of the keys.³¹ The Roman primacy was thus essentially a supernatural and charismatic one.³²

The African Church however, usually showed great deference to the Roman bishop and might submit conciliar decisions for his ratification, particularly in such cases as the condemnations of Pelagius when the Africans sought more general acceptance for their decisions.³³ The Africans clearly expected the same kind of respect for their own rights to be reciprocated.

In effect, the African Catholic Church had come to work on the principle that whatever a Church within the Catholic Church community as a whole was capable of doing by its own means, the community as a whole should not do (a principle known in the modern Catholic Church as subsidiarity).³⁴ This idea went back to Cyprian, who had stated to Pope Cornelius that according to all African bishops, cases should be ruled on where they arose.³⁵

Augustine, bishop of Hippo, lies at the heart of the achievement of the African Catholic Church in this period. Augustine provided the African Church with a huge body of writings suited to its own character and requirements. It would be difficult to overestimate their influence not just for the Church of his time but for the Church of his successors

in Africa, and not just in Africa but throughout the history of the Christianity.

Augustine wrote many pastoral works including hundreds of sermons, and works against the Donatists, Manichees, Pelagians, Arians, Jews and pagans in defence of the Catholic faith. He also wrote works of exegesis, didactic works and theological treatises, including his great speculative work *De Trinitate*. He conducted an extensive correspondence with people abroad and in Africa, clerics, monks and laymen, Catholics, Donatists and pagans, people of all estates, as well as writing his famous spiritual autobiography, the *Confessiones*, and his great history of redemption, *De Civitate Dei*. By the end of his life Augustine's religious thought had undergone an important evolution. Most of what we know of African Christianity in this period c.390-430 comes from his writings. Augustine did much to spread monasticism in Africa, stemming from his episcopal monastery in Hippo from which many monk-bishops emerged and set up their own episcopal monasteries to supply clergy. These men, such as Alypius, bishop of Thagaste, Evodius, bishop of Uzalis and Possidius, bishop of Calama, Augustine's biographer, spread Augustine's form of spirituality and applied his ideas.

Augustine also developed controversial but influential theological ideas on predestination and grace. In the last years of his life, Augustine had come to think that salvation could only be initiated by God's grace and that some people had been predestined to salvation, suggesting that others were doomed to damnation, according to God's inscrutable will. In 418, Augustine had managed to obtain support from

the bishop of Rome for his condemnation of Pelagius and his supporters for their ideas on the primacy of free will in salvation.

Augustine also developed a conception of the Catholic Church which saw it as less dependent on secular authority than it must have seemed since Constantine decided to support Caecilian. The Donatists had continued an African tradition in regarding themselves as the divine city over and against the diabolical institutions of the secular authority (including the Church of the *traditores*). Augustine had himself been caught up in the enthusiasm for the prophetic fulfilment of the *tempora christiana* and the divine mission of emperor and Empire, but from around the time of the sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410, his feelings had begun to change.³⁶ Augustine thought in the first ten books of his *De Civitate Dei* to rebut the accusations of such pagan Romans that the Christians had brought the calamity of the barbarian invasions upon the Empire by neglecting the worship of the traditional gods. As a consequence, he often suggested an equation between the secular power of the Romans and their membership of the City of Babylon - that is of the Devil and the reprobate.³⁷

In the later books of *De Civitate Dei* written between 416 and 427, Augustine expanded the idea of the two Cities - of Babylon and of God - but defined them in a more explicitly eschatological way. In this world members of both Cities coexist intermingled,³⁸ though separated by different loves.³⁹ The righteous should cooperate with others in the institutions of this world so that they should share peace. They should use these institutions of earthly peace so they might eventually enjoy

God, whom they love, in eternal life, whereas the unrighteous would use this earthly peace to enjoy the things of this world which they love.⁴⁰ The two Cities did not take on a physical temporal existence but were made up of souls.⁴¹ Their composition would not be known until the end of time. There was nothing apocalyptic about the City of God; 'it is not for us to know the time of his coming'.⁴² The Church, then, was not the City of God on earth. The righteous might exist within the Church as pilgrims on the way to the City of God. The two Cities were in a state of becoming. The Church too was a temporal institution shared by the good and the bad who were destined for different Cities, but it was only through the true universal Catholic Church that salvation might be found. So it is through and in the Church that the becoming of the City of God takes place.⁴³

The State likewise contained members of both Cities in all its offices. The powers that be might be ordained by God but they were not necessarily righteous souls. God had in the past tested Christians by sending tyrants and persecutors and might do so again. Meanwhile pious emperors like Theodosius were considered sons of the Church who should look to the spiritual welfare of their subjects first and should take the advice of clerics.⁴⁴ To the mature Augustine, there was no divine scheme of History. For him the Christianisation of the Roman Empire was more or less accidental to the history of salvation. He believed that man was in his sixth and last age and that there would be no divine interference in the course of history between Christ's Incarnation and his Second Coming.

This subtle agnostic approach to history did not however appeal to men who saw the destinies of the Roman Empire and the Catholic Church as too much bound up with each other and too important in this life for them not to be divinely guided in this world. Orosius, who wrote seven books of *Historiae adversus Paganos* in 417 on the request of Augustine, despite having to leave Spain because of the Visigoths, took a much more optimistic view of the destiny of the Christian Empire, to the point that he could use the term *patria* ambiguously to refer either to the Roman Empire or the heavenly kingdom.⁴⁵ He also considered that the Empire would absorb and christianise the invading peoples.⁴⁶

Yet Augustine in his desacralisation of history, like Orosius in his optimism, could take for granted the continuation of the Roman imperial apparatus of government. At the time when Augustine and Orosius were writing, the Roman authorities were implementing a policy of forcing Donatists into the Catholic fold. Intermittent persecution of the Donatists had been attempted without much positive effect. Under Theodosius and his sons Honorius and Arcadius, the destiny of the Empire and the Catholic Church were seen to be intimately intertwined. Unity of one meant unity of the other. The years 399 to 401 had seen much suppression of paganism in Africa. There is an evolution in Augustine's thought at this time which brought him to the conclusion that external intervention should break down the force of habit which protected the schismatic congregations and thus bring about an inner change in the individual.⁴⁷ The laws of 405 were framed to force the Donatist clergy and congregations into the Catholic Church and were aimed particularly

at their church leaders. But this had only a cosmetic effect in the form of spasmodic persecution between 405 and 411.⁴⁸

However, when Count Marcellinus called all bishops of the Catholic and Donatist Churches in Africa together for a conference in Carthage in 411, to decide once and for all the relative justice of their conflicting claims, the Donatist Church could still field 284 bishops as against 286 by the Catholics. Even the Catholics admitted to the Donatist superiority in Numidia Consularis and Donatists were clearly still numerous in all provinces, though less so in Proconsularis.⁴⁹ There had obviously been many new sees created by the Catholics in the years preceding the conference, particularly in Numidia, to compete with the Donatists.⁵⁰ The Donatists had created new bishops to counterbalance Catholic ones.⁵¹ If the Donatists showed a predominance in the countryside, particularly in Numidia, this can partly be explained by the effects of persecution in forcing clergy and faithful to seek the patronage of powerful rural landowners.⁵² The large number of bishops reflected to a degree the nature of society in much of Africa with its many small towns and rural communities over which the bishop might gain a notable degree of control and leadership. This had become true of the Catholic Church too to some extent, partly as a result of their competition with the Donatists. Even before the Conference a Catholic Council spoke about the problems of clerics installing themselves in a community and lording it over that community and rejecting the fraternity of his fellow bishops.⁵³ We can imagine that these centrifugal forces were even more tenacious amongst the Donatists.

The severe laws of the Emperor Honorius of 412 and 414 were now applied firmly and continuously to break down the local power of Donatist bishops by confiscating their estates, and churches and landowners by the threatened imposition of civic disabilities. In some cases Donatist communities appeared quite prepared to turn Catholic as long as they were given a bishop.⁵⁴ Some communities proved resilient, particularly in Numidia.⁵⁵ The imperial laws could only directly affect the towns. For the application of the laws in the countryside bishops acted as a medium. There is a noticeable difference between Augustine's early tentative letters to local dignitaries and the high standing Catholic bishops came to hold with the secular authorities after 411.⁵⁶ Many members of town *curiae* were still pagan, others Donatist.⁵⁷ Bishops stood in to fill the gap.

The realignment of power however, was not total but relative; it can be overstated.⁵⁸ The Catholic Church could be impotent before the forces of imperial *Realpolitik*.⁵⁹ Nor should the residual importance of paganism be underestimated as a social and cultural force as well as a religious one.⁶⁰ What is more, the Catholic Church still depended on the support of the lay aristocracy in the localities. To what degree churchleaders in Africa came from amongst the ranks of the lay aristocracy is uncertain but the high numbers of bishops meant that men of middling rank, not always highly educated, might be promoted to the episcopate. Some nobles would no doubt have their 'own' bishop or priest for their rural villa settlement.⁶¹ The strength of the organisation of the provincial Church must however have tempered this local dependence. Indeed, fifty years after the Vandal invasion, Victor of Vita would

consider the provincial nobility and the Catholic Church as the twin pillars of *romanitas* in Africa.

The Catholic Church may have gained in wealth through the confiscation of Donatist churches and lands, but Catholic clerics also had on their hands large and, no doubt, at times, passive ex-Donatist congregations. Not all bishops can have been as active as Augustine in attempting to absorb these effectively. His creation of new bishoprics in the rural areas carved out of the old diocese of Hippo did not always meet with success. Maximinus, bishop of Sinitum was boycotted by his new congregation.⁶² Antoninus, bishop of Fussala exploited his new office for temporal gains at the expense of his flock, then sought papal support when he was deposed.⁶³ The Catholic Church had always had problems in recruiting clergy and clearly there were not enough talented clergy to cope with the new influx.⁶⁴ Those Donatist clergy who had been allowed to retain their offices because they had converted as a result of the new edicts would not have been imbued with the traditions of the Catholic Church.⁶⁵ Clearly, though it possessed a solid basis, the Catholic Church by the eve of the Vandal invasion must have suffered from indiscipline and discontent both amongst clergy and laity as the price of unity.

From 420 onwards we hear very little about the Donatists and so it is hard to judge their fate under the Vandals. It appears that the new rulers did not usually differentiate between the two Churches since they shared the same doctrinal stance in Trinitarian matters against the Vandal Arians and so Donatists probably suffered a similar fate to the Catholics.⁶⁶ There is some slight evidence suggesting a picture of the Donatists, sometimes collaborating with the Vandals, sometimes suffering under them, sometimes opposed to the Catholics.⁶⁷ What appears to have happened, extrapolating from the slight evidence from the Byzantine period, was that Donatists eventually became absorbed into the Catholic Church. In the process the latter must necessarily have become more latitudinarian, tolerating the more digestible features of Donatist piety and separatism. Elements of both traditions must have contributed towards the Catholic Church as it evolved under the Vandals. Donatism perhaps now came to represent one end of the spectrum of opinions about ecclesiology, while also providing a convenient label to use against those receding from Catholic unity.⁶⁸ The identity of the Donatist Church must have been further masked by the Vandal persecution of the Catholic Church, which led to its reduction to a situation comparable to that of the Donatists under imperial rule.

Naturally, the Catholics were to adopt much of the common Christian ideology and rhetoric of the persecuted righteous which the Donatists had used since the Caecilian affair. Their compromise with worldly power was now less obvious. The characteristic need of African ecclesiology for a counter-Church was, after the Vandal invasion, fulfilled by the existence of a triumphal Arian Church with which nearly

all polemic was to be preoccupied. What is more, the representatives of Roman provincial society who resisted the pressure to convert to Arianism were probably often too depressed economically to support two separate Church hierarchies. Power conflicts between the two Churches in individual localities were thus probably transmuted into factional struggles within Catholic communities.⁶⁹ If Donatist communities did continue to exist they probably came to do so in inward-looking rural communities jealous of their separateness on the fringes of the framework of the Catholic Church. Other more pressing matters of Church discipline brought about by the disestablishment and persecution of the Catholic Church overtook any formal Catholic-Donatist conflict. It is significant that after the 480's the only references to Donatists we have are in polemical writings by Catholics whose overriding concern is Arianism.

However, the spirit of autonomy which the African Church inherited from Cyprian and the Donatist Church, but which was also developed in the Catholic Church in the decades prior to the arrival of the Vandals, was to stand the Catholic Church in good stead, since under the Vandals it had to stand on its own two legs to survive as a disestablished Church in Africa without much support from outside. How far any dogged resistance at local level can be put down to specifically Donatist tradition is almost impossible to establish. The Catholic Church under the Vandals was the heir to a wide spectrum of traditions and forms of piety from both the Catholic and Donatist Church, though there was also much in common between the two. The reason that we hear little about the Donatists under the Vandals must also be because

Numidia Consularis, the heartland of Donatism, seems to have fallen mostly outside the Vandal kingdom, within which most Catholic writers lived.⁷⁰

However, there does appear to have been a transitional period in the Catholic Church in the earlier part of Gaiseric's reign when its leaders looked not only to the present persecution by the Arians but also backwards to their own persecution of the Donatists. This is noticeable in the works of these years which have been ascribed to Quodvultdeus, in which Donatists (and others) as well as Arians are reproached for their heresy.⁷¹ We know also that the African bishop Asclepius had written against the Arians and was considering writing against Donatists.⁷² But the most telling statement is that of the anonymous author of a *De Trinitate* who in the face of Arian persecution sought to justify the persecution of the Donatists: 'But I see certain contradictions being brought into the world and people reproaching us with the persecutions of the Donatists, whose madness did violence to the laws and these were endured patiently by the laws. For, if the mother Catholic Church took into its pious bosom any of them, such as those who had converted by will, without any injury of baptism, or quarrel, or any outrage to the Holy Spirit, they would grieve that Catholic charity had been hidden from them for so long'.⁷³ Catholics still wished to remember the violence of the Donatist clergy and Circumcellions which had provided an official reason for the suppression of Donatism. The rule of Roman law was long seen as the protector of the Catholic Church;⁷⁴ but at the time when the Catholic were being persecuted themselves, they did not wish to be seen with blood on their

own hands. We must now consider what the effects of the Vandal invasion on the African Church actually were and how the Church responded to them.

CHAPTER 1 NOTES

- 1) On the origin of the schism between Donatists and Catholics see W.H.C.Frend *The Donatist Church. A movement of protest in North Africa* 2nd Impression (Oxford, 1971) 141-59; J-P.Brisson *Christianisme et autonomisme dans l'Afrique romaine* (Paris, 1958) 123-37.
- 2) Cf. Cyprian Ep.65.2, CSEL 3.2 ed.W.Hartel (Vienna, 1871) 723.
- 3) Cyprian Ep.54.3, CSEL 3.2 622-3.
- 4) Cyprian as well as the Donatists used Song of Songs 4:12-3 to define their ecclesiology; *Hortus conclusus...*, *puteus aquae vivae*. Cyprian Ep.74.11, CSEL 3.2 808-9; Augustine *Contra Cresconium* 4.63.77, CSEL 52 ed.M.Petschenig (Vienna, 1909) 576.
- 5) R.Markus *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of Saint Augustine* 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1989) 106.
- 6) *Gesta Collationis Carthaginensis* 3.258, CCSL 149A ed.S.Lancel (Turnhout,1974) 243.
- 7) Frend *Donatist Church* 94; Markus *Saeculum* 109.
- 8) On the density of bishoprics see W.Eck 'Der Episkopat im spätantike Afrika' *HZ* 235 (1983) 274-5.
- 9) P.R.L.Brown 'Religious dissent in the later Roman Empire' in *Religion and Society in the age of Saint Augustine* (London, 1972) 252-3.
- 10) *Gesta* 1.157, CCSL 149A 128. See also Lancel *Actes* 1 177-8.
- 11) See G.Folliet 'L'épiscopat africain et la crise arienne au IV siècle' *REByz* 24 (1966) 212-22.
- 12) Cf.Folliet 'L'épiscopat africaine' 201-12. The Donatists quickly anathematised the Arians: Augustine Ep.185.47-8, CSEL 57 ed.A.Goldbacher

- (Vienna, 1911) 402. On Donatus and his Arianising works see Jerome *De Viris Illustribus* 93 ed.G.Herding (Leipzig, 1924) 54.
- 13) Bishops such as Petilian of Cirta and Optatus of Tingad were figures of great influence in their localities. A number of officials too were clearly Donatist or sympathetic to them to judge from *Constitutio Sirmondiana* 14 (a.407), *Codex Theodosianus* ed. T.Mommsen (Berlin,1954) 918-9.
- 14) Cf.Brown 'Religious dissent in the later Roman Empire' 248 and 'Christianity and local culture in late Roman Africa' in *Religion and Society* 279-300.
- 15) Lancel *Actes* 1 166-7.
- 16) Possidius of Calama *Vita Augustini* 7.2 ed.A.A.R.Bastiaensen (Rome, 1975) 146; Lancel *Actes* 1 118-23, 31-43; Augustine *Contra Litteras Petilianæ* 2.83.184, CSEL 52 ed.M.Petschenig (Vienna, 1909) 114.
- 17) Augustine was not unduly disturbed by such opportunism: P.R.L.Brown *Augustine of Hippo: a Biography* (London, 1969) 231.
- 18) Augustine *De Genese Liber Imperfectus* 1.4, CSEL 27 ed.J.Zycha (Vienna, 1894) 461.
- 19) E.g.Optatus of Milev *De Schismate Donatistarum* 5.3, CCSL 26 ed.C.Ziwsa (Vienna, 1893) 125; Augustine *Contra Cresconium* 1.28.33, CCSL 52 352-3.
- 20) Augustine *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 95.11, CCSL 39 ed.E.Dekkers and J.Fraipont (Turnhout, 1956) 1350.
- 21) Cf.Augustine *De Baptismo* 4.1.1, CSEL 51 ed.M.Petschenig (Vienna, 1908) 223; Fulgentius *De Fide ad Petrum* 80 (37), CCSL 91A 757.
- 22) For fulfilments of prophecies in Augustine's early thought; *De Consensu Evangelistarum* 1.14.21, CSEL 43 ed.F.Weihrich (Vienna, 1904)

19-21; for the views of the Dalmatian bishop Hesychius of 418, Augustine *Ep.* 198.6, CSEL 57 260-1. See below 148.

23) *Concilia Africae 345-525* ed. C. Munier (Turnhout, 1974) CCSL 149 *passim*; C. Munier 'La tradition littéraire des canons africaines 345-525' *Recherches Augustiniennes* 10 (1975) 3-22 esp. 7-10; F. L. Cross 'History and fiction in the African canons' *JTS* n.s. 12 (1961) 227-247.

24) Canon stating that primates should not call themselves *principes* or *summus pontifex*: CCSL 149 40.

25) Provincial councils: CCSL 149 *xxiv-xxxviii*.

26) For the Apiarius affair see W. Marschall *Karthago und Rom. Die Stellung der nordafrikanischen Kirche zum apostolischen Stuhl in Rom. Päpste und Papsttum* 1 (Stuttgart, 1971) 162-203.

27) See e.g. the letter of Evodius bishop of Uzali to abbot Valentinus of Hadrumetum, PLS 2 334; 'It is... a devilish prompting to question what has been laid down by a full council of the African Church', cf. Brown *Augustine of Hippo* 402. This was not however, Augustine's outlook. He admitted the right to question. Augustine also considered that a later council could correct an earlier one; *De Baptismo* 2.3.4, CSEL 51 ed. M. Petschenig (Vienna, 1908) 178.

28) Letter of the African Council of 424 to Pope Celestine, CCSL 149 171. Cf. also this idea as it applied to the emperor's authority in the Byzantine period: Facundus of Hermiane *Pro Defensione Trium Capitularum* ed. J. M. Clement and R. V. Plaetse (Turnhout, 1974) CCSL 90A, on the general authority of the Church 8.7.2-3, CCSL 90A 254, on papal fallibility, 10.2.14, CCSL 90A 304; on the emperor's limited authority in the Church 8.7.22, CCSL 90A 258.



- 29) Pope Leo *Ep.* 12, PL 54 645-56. See C.Lepelley 'S.Leo le Grand et l'église maurétanienne: primauté romaine et autonomie africaine au Ve siècle' *CT* 10 (1967) 189-204.
- 30) Augustine *Ep.* 87.1-3, CSEL 34 ed.A.Goldbacher (Vienna,1895) 397-9. Cf. Fulgentius *De Trinitate* 1.2, CCSL 91A 633.
- 31) For this general interpretation of Matt. 16:18-9: A.M.La Bonnardière 'Tu es Petrus. La pericope de Matthieu 16:13-23 dans l'oeuvre de Saint Augustin' *Irenikon* 34 (1961) 451-499. For examples of a similar interpretation in the Vandal period; Fulgentius *De Remissione Peccatorum* 1.19, CCSL 91A 667; 1.24.2, CCSL 91A 673; *De Fide* 39, CCSL 91A 737; and of Matt. 18:18, Victor 2.34 (21).
- 32) Augustine *Contra Duas Epistulas Pelagii* 1.1.2, CSEL 60 ed.C.Urba and J.Zycha (Vienna, 1913) 424.
- 33) Augustine *Ep.* 177, CSEL 44 ed. A.Goldbacher (Vienna, 1904) 669-88. In the Byzantine period, Facundus of Hermiane's *Pro Defensione trium Capitulorum* was sent to Pope Vigilius to persuade him to represent African views on the Three Chapters dispute in Constantinople in 548. See E.Chrysos 'Zur Datierung und Tendenz der Werke des Facundus von Hermiane' *Kleronomia* 1 (1969) 317-8.
- 34) See P.Zmire 'Recherches sur la collegialité épiscopale dans l'église d'Afrique' *Recherches Augustiniennes* 7 (1972) 70-1.
- 35) Cyprian *Ep.* 59.14, CSEL 3.2 683. Letter of African Council of 424 to Pope Celestine CCSL 149 171.
- 36) Markus *Saeculum* 30-44.
- 37) E.g. *De Civitate Dei* 2.29, CCSL 47 ed.B.Dombart and A.Kalb (Turnhout, 1955) 63-5.
- 38) E.g. *De Civitate Dei* 1.35, CCSL 47 33-4.

- 39) *De Civitate Dei* 14.28, CCSL 48 ed. B. Dombart and A. Kalb (Turnhout, 1955) 451-2.
- 40) *De Civitate Dei* 18.54, CCSL 48 656, 19.14-7, CCSL 48 680-5.
- 41) 'A city is made up of its citizens not its walls' *De Urbis Excidio* 6 ed. M.V.O'Reilly (Washington, 1955) 66; *De Civitate Dei* 1.15, CCSL 47 17.
- 42) *De Civitate Dei* 18.53, CCSL 48 652-3. Augustine used this coexistence of good and bad to define the Church. For the Donatists this defined the world, not the Church, which was the temporal community of the Pure, but for Augustine the world and the church were coextensive (see Markus *Saeculum* 122-3). Cf. Victor 2.19 (17).
- 43) *De Civitate Dei* 18.49, CCSL 48 647. Augustine drew the idea of the two cities from the thought of the Donatist layman Tyconius - that the Church might be holy but contain sinners and that the Church's holiness is not invalidated by the presence of sinners within. Cf. Tyconius' *Liber Regularum* 2 ed. V.S. Babcock (Atlanta, 1989) 14-20. Augustine *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani* 1.1, CSEL 51 ed. C. Ziwsa (Vienna, 1898) 19-20. Tyconius had in fact sympathised with the Catholic concept of *unitas* and had been excommunicated by the Donatists as a result.
- 44) *De Civitate Dei* 5.24-6, CCSL 47 160-3. Cf. Fulgentius *De Veritate Praedestinationis et Gratiae* 2.39, CCSL 91A 516-7.
- 45) Orosius *Historiae adversus Paganos* 5.2, CSEL 5 280-1.
- 46) Orosius *Historiae adversus Paganos* 7.43.1-15, CSEL 5 554-5 and 7.41.8-10 CSEL 5 559-63. F. Paschoud *Roma Aeterna. Etudes sur le patriotisme romain dans l'Occident latin à l'époque des grandes invasions* Bibliotheca Helvetica Romana 7 (Rome, 1967) 286-8.

- 47) Brown 'Saint Augustine's attitude towards religious coercion' in *Religion and Society* 268-76.
- 48) Cf. Brown 'Religious coercion in the later Roman Empire: the case of North Africa' in *Religion and Society* 309-10.
- 49) For number see Lancel *Actes* 1 116-130. For admission of Donatist domination of Numidia Consularis; *Gesta* 1.18, CCSL 149A 70; Lancel *Actes* 1 151-63.
- 50) *Gesta* 1.165, CCSL 149A 131 with Petilian, Donatist bishop of Cirta speaking, *dum absentibus nobis, aut in locis aut in civitatibus, aut in diocesibus passim multas imagines erigunt ut numerosi videantur*. Also *Gesta* 1.182, CCSL 149A 134, Petilian again, *Sic tu multos habes per omnes agros dispersos. Immo crebros ubi habes sane et sine populis habes*.
- 51) Lancel *Actes* 1 121-2, 132-4, 151-65. Donatist presence in the larger towns was nearly comparable to that of the Catholics. For a recent discussion of Donatists in town and countryside see A. Mandouze 'Les Donatistes entre ville et campagne' in *Deuxième Colloque national d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord. Montpellier 1985* (Paris, 1986) 193-217.
- 52) Cf. E. Tengström *Donatisten und Katholiken: soziale, wirtschaftliche und politische Aspekte nordafrikanische Kirchenspaltung* *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothobergensia* 18 (Göteborg, 1964) 129-64. Lancel *Actes* 1 125-141.
- 53) CCSL 149 189-90.
- 54) Brown 'Religious dissent in the later Roman Empire' in *Religion and Society* 253.

- 55) Augustine *Contra Gaudentium* 1.37.47, CSEL 53 ed.C.Ziwsa (Vienna, 1910) 247.
- 56) Cf.Brown 'Religious coercion' in *Religion and Society* 329.
- 57) For cases see Brown 'Religious coercion' in *Religion and Society* 330.
- 58) See C.Lepelley *Les cités de l'Afrique du Bas-Empire* 2 vols. (Paris, 1979, 81).
- 59) See Brown *Augustine of Hippo* 399-400.
- 60) (Ps.?)—*Quodvultdeus Liber De Promissionibus et Praedicationibus Dei* 3.38.44, CCSL 60 ed.R.Braun (Turnhout, 1976) 185-6.
- 61) Eck 'Der Episkopat im spätantike Afrika' 284-93. Lancel considers that many toponyms of sees ending in *-iana/um* relate to landed estates (*fundi*) *Actes* 1 136, 183-4.
- 62) Augustine *Ep.*105.4, CSEL 34 597.
- 63) Augustine *Ep.*209, CSEL 57 347-53 and *Ep.*20*, CSEL 88 ed.J.Divjak (Vienna, 1981) 94-112.
- 64) CCSL 149 194; Augustine *Ep.*22*.1, CSEL 88 113 of 420. Antoninus of Fussala could hardly have been more than twenty years old when he was made bishop (Augustine *Ep.*20*.4, CSEL 88 96). The statutory age threshold was thirty; CCSL 149 294.
- 65) CCSL 149 224-7.
- 66) There is much unanimity between modern scholars on this point - P.Monceaux *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à l'invasion arabe* 4 (Paris, 1912) 97; Frend *The Donatist Church* 301 (at least in Proconsularis and Byzacena); R.Markus 'Country bishops in Byzantine Africa' in D.Baker (ed.) *Studies in Church History*

16 (Cambridge, 1979) 9; Brown 'Religious coercion' in *Religion and Society* 315.

67) See Ch.1 appendix below 56-60.

68) Markus 'Country bishops' is, in my opinion, the most credible interpretation of the supposed revival of Donatism in Numidia as perceived by Pope Gregory I e.g. *Ep.* 1.72, CCSL 140 ed. D. Norberg (Turnhout, 1982) 80-1. The information about this came through one Paul, bishop of Micivibus in Numidia who considered that Donatist bishops were being put in charge of churches by Catholic bishops. Roman attitudes about prohibiting Africans from ecclesiastical orders was enshrined in a formula in the *Liber Diurnus* which expressed fear that they might turn out to be Manicheans or *rebaptizati*. This viewpoint would seem to go back to Pope Gelasius I (492-6) and was to be used by later Popes. It reflects a rather xenophobic suspicion of Africans - that they were all tarred with the same brush. To quote Markus 'Country bishops' 8-9, 'The situation now appears to be that something that can still be called Donatism exists in the interstices of the network of a single episcopate in a peaceful coexistence disturbed only when local tensions, perhaps sparked off by clerical rivalries, difficulties over promotion and the like, flared into occasional conflict which brought Papal intervention in the train. It may well be that there were communities in the African Church and especially in Numidia which still preserved peculiarities originally associated with the schismatic Church'. The Numidian episcopate certainly did not seem to object to such Donatist bishops who took their turn in the normal provincial succession. Nor did Gregory find much support from the provincial civil powers against them. For a more literal interpretation of the evidence see Frend *Donatist Church*

309-12 and more recently 'Donatist and Catholic in the organisation of Christian communities in the North African countryside' *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo di Spoleto* 28 (1982) 601-34, esp. 630-4.

69) E.g. the competition for the see of Ruspe between Fulgentius and the deacon Felix VF 14.2-21.

70) See Ch.2 n.26.

71) E.g. *Liber de Promissionibus* 2.6.10, CCSL 60 ed. R. Braun (Turnhout, 1976) 81; *De Cataclysmo* 5.7-10, CCSL 60 415.

72) Gennadius *De Viris Illustribus* 74, ed. G. Herding (Leipzig, 1924) 101.

73) CCSL 90 ed. B. Schwank (Turnhout, 1961) 242-3.

74) See for instance, the *Epitome Carthaginiensis* MGH a.a.9 496 - according to this Antichrist in the shape of Arianism provoked priests, kingdoms and peoples to discord in faith and, supported by kings, priests publicly committed in church homicide, adultery and many other heinous crimes *que leges Romanae puniunt*. Courtois 407-8 considers the work to date to 496/7.

Chapter 1 appendix

Donatism in the Vandal period

This appendix will look at literary evidence for the existence of Donatists in the Vandal period and their relations with the Arians and the Catholics (relevant references to J.-L. Maier *Le dossier du Donatisme. Tome II: de Julien l'Apostat à saint Jean Damascène (361-750)* (Berlin, 1989) are given as *Dossier* plus page numbers).

For the suggestion of Donatist collaboration with Vandal Arians we have firstly the mention in Victor of Vita's *Historia Persecutionis* 3.71 (59), *Sed ille legis datae transversor ex Donatianorum heresim ad eos* [Vandal Arians] *veniens quondam Nicasius in breve simili morte periit* [that is to king Huneric]. Some have considered this passage as leading on logically from the rest of the work e.g. A. Roncoroni 'Sulla morte di re Unerico' *Romanobarbarica* 2 (1977) 247-57. However most scholars have considered this section to be an addition, e.g. Halm, Victor (58), Petschenig, CCL 7 108 and S. Costanza, 'Considerazioni storiografiche nell'*«Historia persecutionis Africanae provinciae»* di Vittore di Vita' *Buletino di Studi Latini* 6 (1976) 30-6, esp. 32. Considering how highly emotional the preceding section from Victor 3.55 (56) is and the build up of the whole work to this, it is clear that the persecutions were at their height and King Huneric was not dead when the work was first completed. When this additional final paragraph might have been added is uncertain, but it is most likely to date from when the work appears to have been revised in 488/9. The above sentence might be translated to mean that Nicasius converted from Donatism to Arianism.

Within the context of the work, *legis datae transversor* could even be taken to mean that Micasius, a Donatist, was involved in bringing the laws originally directed against Donatists under the Empire to the attention of Huneric who then directed them against the Catholics (Victor 3.3-14 (40-43)). J.Moorhead translates this phrase as 'transgressor of the revealed law' which is, however, a more likely interpretation, Victor of Vita *History of the Persecution of the African Province* Liverpool University Translated Texts for Historians 10 (Liverpool, 1991) 93. Whichever interpretation is adopted the sentence, at least, intimates Donatist-Arian relations.

The clearest case of Donatist opposition to the Arian Vandals is the entry in the 438 recension of the *Liber Genealogus* MGH a.a.9 ed.T.Mommsen (Berlin, 1892) 196; P.Monceaux *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne* 6 (Paris, 1922) 249-58. This equated the Vandal king Gaiseric (429-477) through numerology to the number 666 representing Antichrist. The 463 recension notably avoids this equation (see ch.3 n.107).

The reference in Pope Leo's *Ep.* 167.18 of 458 to bishop Rusticus of Narbonne (PL 54 1209) 'concerning those who come from Africa or Mauretania and do not know in which sect they should be baptised' would suggest that those fleeing were used to there being different religious groups amongst whom baptism was an issue (see *Dossier* 301-2). We know from Leo *Ep.* 12.6, PL 54 662 that Donatism existed in Mauretania in 446 (see *Dossier* 295-6). One person considered to be a Donatist is the subject of a letter from Avitus, bishop of Vienne to Stephanus, bishop

of Lyons (Ep.26, MGH a.a.6.2 ed.R.Peiper 57) to whose attention this person had come. It is not clear how Stephanus knew this person to be a Donatist. This was viewed as an isolated case and hardly constituted an exodus of Donatists to Gaul (see *Dossier* 310-2).

The *Sermo Fastidiosus* CCSL 91 280-3 (*Dossier* 315-7) is an Arian sermon written no doubt in the 520's by an Arian priest, once a Catholic monk and priest (*Fulgentius Contra Fastidiosum* 1.1, CCSL 91 283) lambasting both Catholics and Donatists, referring to them as a *bipartitus error*, *Sermo Fastidiosus* 2, CCSL 91 281. This rhetorical method of comparing and contrasting heresies is commonplace in antiheretical literature and the two heresies are then treated separately, suggesting Donatists might be viewed as having a separate identity from the Catholics; the Arians were opposed to both. This picture should be qualified by the fact that Fastidiosus copied what he said on the Donatists directly from a letter of Fulgentius written to a presumably African holy woman, Stephanica (*Contra Fastidiosum* 10, CCSL 91 296). Fastidiosus had converted from Catholicism only two years previously (*Contra Fastidiosum* 22, CCSL 91 308). Such recently ex-Catholic Arians would be likely to be well aware of what Donatism was, moreso probably than someone who had been Arian all their life, hence their reference to its separateness. Such recent converts (and the efforts of King Thrasamund (496-523) at the end of his reign may have produced a number, see below 324-6) could pass on their awareness of the existence of the Donatists to other Arians.

We know of several anti-Donatist works by Catholic writers which also suggest the continuing separateness of their identities. Of these only the *Adversus Fulgentium* dated by Lambot to 430x450 names a specific Donatist opponent whose work, written about 430 and arguing for the necessity of rebaptising Catholics, is replied to. See C.Lambot 'L'écrit attribué à Augustin, *Adversus Fulgentium Donatistam*' *RBen* 58 (1948) 184 (Dossier 237-85).

We know also from Gennadius' *De Viris Illustribus* 74, 101 of the work of Asclepius, bishop of Baia (?) who had written a work against the Donatists and was 'now said to be writing against the Donatists'. When this was written or contemplated is uncertain. The section in which the chapter on Asclepius falls was written around 467-8 according to the analysis of A.Feder in 'Die Entstehung und Veröffentlichung des gennadianischen Schriftstellerkatalogs' *Scholastik* 8 (1933) 217-232. The *modo scribere dicitur* reference to Asclepius anti-Donatist work is vague and unreliable but all the other writers referred to in this section were around in the 440's and 450's so this would be the best period to which to allot Asclepius writings.

We have already heard of the letters which Fulgentius wrote to Stephanian against the Donatists and Pelagians in *Contra Fastidiosum* 10, CCSL 91 296. However, the parts borrowed by Fastidiosus tell us nothing new of ideas about the Donatists. It is significant how few references Fulgentius makes to Donatism, indeed this is the only mention and is no doubt in response to a request from Stephanian. Fulgentius' writings are on the whole preoccupied with combatting Arianism. He did, however, find

time to deal with other problems which arose such as that of the 'semipelagians' in his *Contra Faustum* (now lost) and the question of the Theopaschite formula in e.g. *Ep.15 Episcoporum* (CCSL 91A ed. J.Fraipont (Turnhout, 1968) 448-57, see below 306). This would seem to suggest that the Donatists were not a serious problem but perhaps also that Fulgentius did not wish to tactlessly upset a *modus vivendi* between Catholics and surviving Donatists who shared their Trinitarian views.

This concern not to provoke schism, which might easily be done by not tolerating local ecclesiastical traditions was Ferrandus' concern when he wrote his *Epistola Paraenetica* to count Reginus in 528 and no doubt reflected his experience of conditions in the African Church - *Nec offendat animos tuos ecclesiarum consuetudo diversa, dum fides est una* PL65 945D, *Populus quippe scandalizatus facile ad schismate prosilit* 946A. As a comparison to the single mention of Donatism in Fulgentius' works, pagans are mentioned twice (*Ep.2 ad Probam* 2, CCSL 91 198 line 15 and *Ep.12 ad Ferrandum*, CCSL 90 359) and Manichaeans six times (see *Index Theologicus* CCSL 91A 1113, also *Ep.ad Scarilam* 32-3, CCSL 91 337-8). Unfortunately, though the collection of sermons published under the name of Fulgentius in a manuscript of the library of saint Mihiel may have been compiled in the Vandal period (see G.Morin 'Notes sur un manuscrit des homélies de pseudo-Fulgence' *RBen* 26 (1909) 228), several sermons included have been demonstrated to be pre-Vandal and *Sermo* 45 of this collection which is concerned with Donatism and rebaptism (see *Dossier* 285-92) cannot be dated to the Vandal period with any security (see E.Dekkers *Clavis Patrum Latinorum* 2nd ed. (Turnhout, 1961) 188-9).

CHAPTER 2

The Vandal invasion and the establishment of the Vandal kingdom and Arian Church in Africa

a) The Vandal invasion and the establishment of the Vandal kingdom

In 429, tens of thousands of Vandals crossed the straits of Gibraltar and began to move eastwards across Mauretania.¹ These people were clearly seeking the land they needed to feed themselves and the security within which to enjoy it, neither of which they had found as they moved en masse across the Rhine in 406/7 through Gaul and into Spain. In southern Spain, their security had been threatened by the presence of Visigoths fighting as confederates for the Romans. For the Vandals, like most of the Germanic peoples who erupted into the western Empire from 400 onwards, were uprooted peasants rather than nomads. Included in their number were also Alans, Sueves and even Hispano-Romans; children and old people as well as warriors.² The dominant grouping among the Vandals themselves were the Hasdings and their leader was king Gaiseric (428-477).

By 430 the migration had reached well into Numidia. Here, according to contemporary sources, the Vandals attacked and burned towns, terrorised the population and laid siege to Hippo. We shall return later to the question of how writers of the time reacted to the invasion. Augustine was caught in this siege along with other bishops and their flocks and died during it. The Vandals appear to have taken

the town after fourteen months.³ Meanwhile imperial forces proved ineffective against the invaders. In early 431, Capreolus, bishop of Carthage ruled out sending any episcopal representation to the Council of Ephesus because all roads were blocked and free movement was impossible.⁴ The Vandals may well have centred themselves on Hippo since it is here that the imperial representative came to treat with them in 435 and gave them land on the same rather vague terms - *ad habitandum* - as they had been given it in Spain as the sources tell us.⁵ This area appears to have been the area they had taken over - Numidia Consularis, Numidia Proconsularis and Mauretania Sitifensis, or parts thereof.⁶ However, the imperial sham of the Vandals being accepted as *confoederati* for the defence of the Empire was soon revealed when Gaiseric sent into exile several Catholic bishops who had sees in this area, including Augustine's biographer, Possidius of Calama, and Novatus, bishop of Sitifis.⁷

Nor were Gaiseric and his people satisfied with this offer of land, for they were now near the province of Proconsularis, legendary for its abundance in corn - along with coastal Byzacena the richest and most Romanised region of Africa and the traditional granary of the western Empire.⁸ Only this would satiate their land-hunger; Gaiseric took Carthage in 439 and Proconsularis and Byzacena seem to have fallen at the same time.⁹ Valentinian III, the emperor in the west, assailed on many sides, could do no more than legalise these acquisitions in a treaty of 442.¹⁰ This time Gaiseric's *de facto* territorial authority was recognised *de iure* though some kind of recognition was allowed to the

emperor through the payment of a tribute and the handing over of his eldest son as hostage."

At a time when other barbarian groups were being given shares of estates and revenues in return for military defence in other parts of the west according to the *hospitalitas* system, recognition of the impregnable position of the Vandals in the richest part of Roman Africa amounted to a secession of this territory from the Empire. The regions the Vandals obtained through this treaty were Proconsularis, Byzacena and, it would seem, Numidia as far west as Cirta, Abaritana, the area around the Aurès and Gaetulia, probably the area to the south and east of the Aurès.¹² The poorer areas of the Mauretaniae and the rest of Numidia were returned to Valentinian III.¹³ Dispossessed landowners from Proconsularis and Byzacena were given land in these areas.¹⁴

Gaiseric appears to have established himself in a strong position of authority after suppressing a conspiracy by his leading men in which more men are said to have been killed on suspicion than had been in war.¹⁵ Gaiseric made Carthage his capital and distributed land to his people. They were given hereditary lots in Proconsularis which became known as the *sortes Vandalarum*.¹⁶ Victor speaks of *Zeugitana vel Proconsularis* being divided up into hereditary lots. Zeugitana would appear to be an old name for the region of Proconsularis or part of that province.¹⁷ When Victor speaks again of Proconsularis and Zeugitana,¹⁸ he is referring to the ecclesiastical province of Proconsularis. That this area of Zeugitana and Proconsularis refers to an area not larger than the province of Proconsularis would also seem to follow from the fact

that Victor also tells us that Gaiseric reserved Byzacena and part of Numidia to himself.¹⁹ This part of Numidia was clearly the eastern part or Numidia Proconsularis, since we have evidence that the western part was under imperial control until 455.²⁰

Other evidence helps to corroborate the limitation of the *sortes Vandalarum* within Proconsularis (that is, the smaller definition of Proconsularis without Numidia Proconsularis, more or less the same as the extent of the ecclesiastical province of Proconsularis). The fact that the Vandals handed over the Carthaginian clergy to the Moors in 483, to be taken into exile in the pre-desert areas of Numidia at Sicca Veneria and Lares (both junctions on the old Roman road system) would suggest that these towns were near to the western limit of the Vandal sphere of control.²¹ These towns also lay near the western border of the ecclesiastical province of Proconsularis.²² That Sicca also lay near the southern limit of the *sortes Vandalarum* would seem to be demonstrated by the fact that when Fulgentius as a monk wandered from around Thelepte in south-west Byzacena into the *territorium* of Sicca he was met by an Arian priest who apparently asked 'Why do you come from your regions to overturn Christian kings?'.²³ The *Vita Fulgentii* says at the end of this episode that Fulgentius left that province and returned to 'the neighbouring places of his province preferring to have the Moors as neighbours than to suffer from the harrassing Arians'.²⁴ Fulgentius actually went to Mididi, just over the border between Proconsularis and Byzacena.²⁵ This, then, suggests that there was considered to be an important difference between the provinces of Byzacena and Proconsularis; when Catholic monks left the former and entered the

latter, they were now considered to be subversive, a threat to the king and his religion of Arianism. Once they left Proconsularis and entered Byzacena they were no longer persecuted nor considered a threat. Since, as we shall see, the Catholic Church was often proscribed within the *sortes Vandalarum*, it would seem to follow that the *sortes Vandalarum* coincided more or less with the province of Proconsularis.

By living together in one area, the richest in Africa, the Vandals could maintain their social cohesion in close contact with the capital, though no doubt even here they were still heavily outnumbered by the existing provincial population.²⁶ Procopius tells us that the Vandals dispossessed the noblest and wealthiest and made them slaves of his sons, Huneric and Genzo.²⁷ The land he did not think good he left to their present landowners but taxed them so heavily that they were left in penury.²⁸ The Vandals he did not tax at all.²⁹ There is enough evidence to allow us to believe that some noble people were enslaved. Many other leading figures fled to other remaining parts of the Empire.³⁰

Gaiseric took over the other areas himself, making them directly dependent upon him - that is, Byzacena and the remaining part of Numidia.³¹ To what degree Vandals settled in these areas is uncertain. There is some epigraphic evidence for people with Germanic names in towns in northern Byzacena and eastern Numidia.³² But these could well have been royal officials based in these towns and it would seem to follow from Victor of Vita's statement and the later anti-

Catholic legislation concerning the *sortes Vandalorum* that the bulk of Vandals were settled in their *sortes* in Proconsularis.

The loss of Carthage was a great blow to the Empire, cutting off an essential source of grain and taxes. Carthage provided Gaiseric with a good port and, probably, a merchant marine with which to raid the unprotected coasts of the western and central Mediterranean.³³ With the unity of the Mediterranean broken by the establishment of the Vandal kingdom the naval weakness of the Empire was revealed and the Vandals stood in to fill the vacuum. The raids were clearly for booty and for taking prisoners for ransom.³⁴ There appears to have been something of an entente between Gaiseric and Valentinian III, the western emperor, from the engagement of Gaiseric's son Huneric to Valentinian III's daughter, Eudocia some time between 442 and 445 up to the death of the emperor in 455.³⁵ We have no records of raiding of areas under imperial control in this period.

The apogee of Gaiseric's reign undoubtedly came in 455. On the death of Valentinian III in that year, Gaiseric seems to have taken over the Balearic islands and Corsica and, according to Victor of Vita, the *ambitus Africae totius*.³⁶ This seems to have included the rest of the coastline of Tripolitania and probably some strategic ports along the Mauretanian coast.³⁷ The western Empire was increasingly disintegrating. However, although those lands left in imperial control in Africa after 442 seem to have been lost to the Empire, the Vandals do not appear to have filled the political vacuum there. Local Moorish leaders seem to

have done so, perhaps in some kind of alliance with the Vandals, since Moors are found raiding alongside Vandals under Gaiseric.³⁸

The year 455 saw Gaiseric's boldest raid yet: that on Rome. Though Pope Leo I intervened to stop them burning and killing in the city, Gaiseric's followers systematically pillaged the city for a fortnight.³⁹ Among the many hostages, Gaiseric captured Eudoxia, Valentinian III's widow and her daughter Eudocia, who was betrothed to his son, Huneric and Placidia, wife of the Patrician Olybrius.⁴⁰ Such was Gaiseric's influence on the imperial scene that Olybrius, now linked to the Vandal king by family ties, became western emperor briefly in 472.⁴¹ Gaiseric appeared to be invincible. All attempts by imperial forces to overthrow him had failed. The imperial effort in 441 had only got as far as Sicily.⁴² The bold and ambitious attempt by the western emperor, Majorian, in 460 to land troops in Mauretania while Count Marcellinus attacked from Tripolitania failed when the Vandals seized the transport ships in Spain through treason.⁴³ In 468 the eastern emperor, Leo, angered by the seizure of the imperial ladies and the rejection of his peace embassies, sent a large seaborne army to land in Africa. It was, however destroyed by fire-ships while anchored at Cap Bon.⁴⁴

After this, the Vandals came into undisputed possession of Sardinia, and for a while Sicily.⁴⁵ Having repeatedly devastated southern Italy the Vandals raided the Balkan provinces in the early 470's.⁴⁶ With the accession of the eastern emperor Zeno in 474, Gaiseric, now possibly in his eighties, signed a treaty of perpetual

peace which would last until Belisarius' invasion of 533.⁴⁷ This treaty appears to have imposed an end to mutual hostilities and a recognition of existing territorial possessions.⁴⁸ The expansive age of Vandal rule came to an end and the mould of the Vandal kingdom was cast for the rest of its existence. The Vandals had gained a secure hold on Africa and had involved at least some of their Moorish neighbours in their profitable raiding. Once this raiding ended, the Moors might trouble the southern and western front; however the Vandals now also controlled a ring of islands, the Balearics, Corsica, Sardinia and for a while then in part, Sicily.⁴⁹ These would provide a protective barrier around their main African possessions and a means by which to dominate this part of the Mediterranean as much now for defensive reasons. These islands were also the other great granaries of the west and the sources by which the Vandals could be sure of cushioning themselves against the chances of famine.⁵⁰

As to the social organisation of the Vandals, Gaiseric at the time of the invasion appears to have divided his followers into 'thousands' headed by *millenarii*, apparently primarily for military purposes.⁵¹ Once the kingdom was established from 442 its government and administration became centred on the king's court. Closest to the king were the *comes*, his friends and advisers.⁵² There was a *praepositus regni* who may have been a Vandal equivalent of the imperial *magister officiorum*,⁵³ perhaps under him were the *notarii*.⁵⁴ The latter seem to have drawn up legislation and diplomatic communications and been involved in financial administration. There were also messengers such as the *veredarii* and *baiuli* and probably spies.⁵⁵ There were also important

household officials such as the *cellarita regis*,⁵⁶ supposedly in charge of the royal commissariat for the king and his followers as they moved between palaces, though the court was based in Carthage.

There were also *procuratores*, who no doubt looked after the royal estates.⁵⁷ Many of them seem to have been of Romano-African stock. Some *procuratores* had charge of the households of the royal princes.⁵⁸ Though many officials we know of had Germanic names there seem to have been a number of provincial Roman extraction who wore Vandal dress, served the king and were given *stipendia* and *annonae*.⁵⁹

We know of two proconsuls in Carthage in the late fifth century, one of whom was very rich and a close friend of the king.⁶⁰ We know too, that there were *iudices provinciarum*.⁶¹ The term *iudices* was often used of provincial governors under the late Empire. These *iudices provinciarum*, such as the proconsuls in Carthage, seem to have acted as chief justices for their province, a major function of the Roman governors.⁶² Since both known proconsuls from the Vandal period were apparently of Roman origin, it is hard to think that they could have judged by any other than some form of Roman law on the behalf of those people who considered themselves to fall under this law. That Roman law continued to be applied in everyday settings unaffected by the Vandal rulers seems clear from the so-called Tablettes Albertini.⁶³

The king could obviously reserve judgements for himself and issue laws as he felt fit.⁶⁴ Laws that survive from the reign of Huneric (477-484), Gaiseric's successor, show that at this time at least, laws

were issued in a similar form and with a similar protocol to that of the imperial Chancellery.⁶⁶ Vandal kings clearly wished to be seen as the equals of the emperor in Constantinople. By the end of the Vandal period, at least, they were wearing purple and the diadem.⁶⁶ Gaiseric dared to issue his own coinage according to the era of Carthage and from Gunthamund's reign, Vandal kings issued their own silver coinage.⁶⁷ All of this image-building could only be done with the aid of Roman know-how. Emphasis on the glory of Carthage looking back to the Punic past and using such symbols as the blade of corn, the horse's head and the Lady of Carthage on coins and in mosaics was a useful means of uniting the loyalties of both Vandals and Romano-Africans.⁶⁸

If the provincial framework in Africa continued to be maintained by the existence of *iudices*, the *ordines civitatum*, the local municipal councils, continued to survive as an instrument of local government,⁶⁹ though their decline would seem to be suggested by the almost total lack of municipal epigraphy surviving from the Vandal period.⁷⁰ The dearth, uncertainty and ambiguity of our surviving evidence makes it difficult to give a positive case for or against urban decline.⁷¹

The other pillar of *romanitas* besides the Catholic Church was provided by the Romano-Africans themselves, particularly, of course, the traditionally educated noble classes. Though many were dispossessed, others clearly found a *modus vivendi* with the new rulers. Once their apparent permanence had been established, the way for a Romano-African to preserve his influence, wealth and culture was to cooperate in the government of the Vandal kings and to contribute what the Romans knew

about administration, law, diplomacy, trade, currency and even warfare. Since the Vandals were outnumbered, the maintenance of existing institutions was the only practical way that government of the whole populace could continue, though the organisation of the Vandals under the *millenarii* must have been important in Proconsularis. Political power, however, was concentrated in the hands of the king and his followers, so that access to power other than on the local scale could only be gained by entering into the confidence of the king and involvement in the vicissitudes of court politics.

It is clear that Gaiseric needed the cooperation and help of Romano-Africans of high social standing, and we know of at least one case of one who fled with his sons to Italy at the time of the invasion, (Gordianus, the grandfather of Fulgentius, later bishop of Ruspe) whose sons Gaiseric allowed to return at a later date, giving back to them some of their ancestral land; it is noticeable that this was in Byzacena (outside the *sortes Vandalarum*) while the family house in Carthage had been taken over by Arian clergy.⁷² As the grandson and heir of the family, Fulgentius in his younger days acted as a *procurator* for the Vandals.⁷³ This cooperation would seem to have been the price for the family's return to a position of social and economic influence in what they must have regarded as their homeland.

The old hierarchy of entitulature accorded to the Roman nobility in the late Empire seems to have remained more or less intact for Romano-African nobles in Africa during the Vandal period.⁷⁴ What is more, there is even evidence for the survival or revival of the

provincial imperial cult. This is unlikely to have been directed towards the Roman emperors since this would have been considered treasonable by the Vandal kings. It may, of course have been directed at the kings themselves.⁷⁵ To judge by the imperial cult of the late Empire, that of the Vandal period must also have been a council of Romano-African nobles who elected from their number officials to maintain the provincial cult.

A number of educated nobles during the later Vandal period found the leisure, security and patronage to write literary works in self-consciously classical styles including a number of poems for Vandal kings and patrons;⁷⁶ the works tended to be of a mannered style and were very variable in level of technique.⁷⁷ Some, however, such as the poems of Luxorius and some of the other poems in the *Anthologia Latina* are of some literary quality.⁷⁸ We know that there was a school of some repute in Carthage and maybe others in other towns.⁷⁹

Outnumbered as the Vandals were even in Proconsularis, they were in danger of being swallowed up in the Romano-African population of the province as a whole, particularly as they increasingly and necessarily adapted to the forms of Roman civilisation by which they found themselves surrounded. The *sortes Vandalorum* and the thousands into which the Vandals were organised were one attempt to counter the problem. Another means of preserving the identity of the Vandals was to prohibit any but Vandals to serve in the army, though we do not know how rigorously this was applied.⁸⁰ This helped to preserve the martial character of the Germanic settlers; particularly so during the successful enterprises of Gaiseric's time. However, after his demise the

only significant conflict in which they engaged was a prolonged war of attrition against the Moorish tribes in Tripolitania and the Chott el Djerid area.⁸¹ For the Vandals it was a war of defence which was not particularly successful and must have produced little booty or fame. Many Vandals must have spent much of their time at court or on their lands.⁸² Clearly, further measures were needed to maintain the group identity of the Vandals as the ruling elite, particularly when governmental control required the cooption of Romano-Africans with different cultural values into their ranks, and the emulation of their culture.

We can see this problem of identity both for Romans and Vandals played out in the sphere of religion. Nicaean Catholicism had become an essential element in the identity of many self-professed Romans throughout the Empire and was certainly so in Africa. The Church had become an important agent of social control within the Empire and, as we have seen, many like Orosius were confident of the Empire's ability to christianise, civilise and absorb the Germanic peoples breaking into the Empire. However, the Visigoths' adoption of the Arian form of Christian belief which they could profess in their own language with the Bible translated into Gothic for them by Ulfila, meant they were already Christian in a way which made them different from the Nicaean Catholics and strengthened their sense of identity as a people. It is not surprising in the circumstances that the Vandals found themselves in that they too should have adopted this form of Christianity.

b) Gaiseric and the establishment of Arianism in the Vandal kingdom

At this stage, it is necessary to look at how and why Gaiseric established an Arian Church in his North African kingdom and what effect this had upon Gaiseric's relations with the Catholic Church within the Vandal kingdom.

When the Vandals became Arians and to what degree they were Arian at the time they entered Africa is uncertain. We do know that at least a part of the Vandals were still attached to traditional 'pagan' beliefs on their invasion of Gaul.⁸³ Gregory of Tours mentions that one young woman was forcibly rebaptised by the Vandals in Spain.⁸⁴ How much credence we can put on this is hard to say since Gregory's knowledge of the more distant past is often not very reliable.⁸⁵ Hydatius, a contemporary Hispano-Roman chronicler, tells us that Gaiseric's brother and predecessor as king of the Vandals, Gontharic, when in Seville, *impie elatus manus in ecclesiam civitatis ipsius extendisset*.⁸⁶ This has taken either to refer to the sacking of the church of St. Vincent in Seville or in Courtois' opinion to the seizing of the church for Arian use.⁸⁷ The sacking of a Catholic church need not mean that its assailants were Arians. The main motive of such actions seem often to have been the seizure of liturgical vessels and fittings.⁸⁸ However, all we can glean from the sentence is that Gontharic somehow offended the sacrosanctity of the church.

Hydatius also tells us that when Gaiseric succeeded his brother Gontharic as king of the Vandals in 428 he became an apostate from the

Catholic faith and became an Arian. This Hydatius knew by hearsay.²⁹ If, indeed this was true, it suggests there were Catholic influences within the Vandal royal family and that there may have been other Catholic Vandals. We also know of five Hispano-Romans who were Catholics who accompanied Gaiseric to Africa as close friends.³⁰ It may well have been that the majority or the most influential body of Vandals were themselves Arian. It is possible that Gaiseric had decided to change his faith at the time of the invasion of Africa and sensing that once amongst the Africans, even more than in their brief stay in Spain his people would need some means of identifying themselves, of strengthening their unity and defining their differences from the Romano-African population and his leadership would be necessary for this. Indeed, the neighbouring Visigoths may have been an important factor in the conversion of the Vandals to Arianism.³¹

In judging the importance of Arianism in the invasion years, we have the problem of separating religious from economic or political motives when considering the accounts of destruction and terror wreaked by the Vandals. We need not doubt that towns were burned and looted, allowing for the inevitable exaggeration of the Romano-African writers upon whom we have to rely for our main accounts.³² However, these accounts were written by ecclesiastics and what they stress is the destruction and violation of churches and the violation of virgins and slaughtering, torturing and enslavement of clergy and monks.³³

When it comes to concrete information, the accounts are on the whole rather general and vague. Victor of Vita, writing fifty years

after the actual invasions, considered that the Vandals turned their attentions particularly to churches, monasteries and cemeteries rather than on towns themselves.⁹⁴ This might be considered to be a distillation and refinement of such contemporary ecclesiastical accounts and traditions as those of Possidius and the *De Tempore Barbarico* sermons.⁹⁵ As we shall see, Victor's *Historia Persecutionis Africanae Provinciae* is particularly emotionally charged.⁹⁶ Yet we must take into account that the African Church had become wealthy in the century or so preceding the invasion; in particular, we hear of clerics being tortured to tell the Vandals where they had hidden their wealth - wealth which they did not always have.⁹⁷

What is more, the Church had become influential in the towns; and with the failure of the imperial military power to withstand the Vandals and with influential laymen fleeing to avoid enslavement, leadership of civil resistance, if only passive, must in many cases have fallen to religious leaders. They may have been galvanised by Augustine's uncompromising advice in 429 to clergy to put their spiritual duties before their personal physical safety.⁹⁸ We know from a letter of Pope Leo I of 446 that when one bishop converted from Novatianism to Catholicism in Mauretania his flock followed him.⁹⁹ As Optatus of Milev had stated when considering the threat of the Donatists, 'while the priest or bishop was cast down, so the people were seized'.¹⁰⁰ Bishops and priests could command great loyalty amongst their flock. Their leadership could be the keystone of a local community. The local church provided the most obvious and accessible sanctuary and refuge in times of invasion, hence, perhaps, the attention

paid to them by the Vandals.¹⁰¹ We know of at least two Catholic bishops who were burned by the Vandals in 430/1, Mansuetus of Urusi in Proconsularis and Pampinianus of Vita in Byzacena.¹⁰² How effective Catholic leadership really was in the face of invasion is hard to gauge from sources which are primarily interested in bewailing the negative effects of the Vandal attack and, in the case of Victor of Vita, in showing what happened to clergy who resisted the Vandals. That some clergy chose flight is clear from various sources and in particular from Augustine's letter opposing flight by clergy.¹⁰³ However, it is also clear that there was a fair degree of at least passive resistance.¹⁰⁴ This question will be dealt with further in the next chapter.

The suggestion here is that political and economic motives can go some way to explaining the violent actions of the Vandals against the Catholic establishment. They do not seem to differ from the actions taken by pagan German invaders in Gaul towards clergy.¹⁰⁵ That specifically religious interests were not necessarily uppermost amongst the Vandals' motives seems to be confirmed by the Catholic descriptions of the nature of the Vandal invasion. There are no mentions of forced baptism. Even Victor of Vita, the most virulently anti-Vandal Catholic writer, puts the violence of the Vandals against the Catholic Church during the invasion down to *hostilitas barbarici furoris* rather than to religious intolerance. It is noticeable that the Vandals are always described as *Vandali* or by the adjective *barbari*, and not as *Arriani*, by Possidius, when he recounts the invasion in the early 430's, though we do have reference to their Arianism in the sermon *De Tempore Barbarico 2* written, it would seem after 435 when all of Africa had been invaded and

when other events revealed the religious conviction of the Vandals.¹⁰⁶ It is not until the description of bishop Deogratias of Carthage's charity towards captives brought from Rome in 455 that *Arriani* are mentioned, in the first book of Victor's *Historia Persecutionis* accounting the reign of Gaiseric.¹⁰⁷ This stress on motives other than religious ones helps to underline the political and economic importance of the Catholic Church within the African province.

Nevertheless, the exile of leading Catholic bishops in 437 from the area which the Vandals had taken over in accordance with the *foedus* of 435 appears to have been more calculated. Now in a position of semi-permanence, the Vandals in Africa were in a position to extend their peace also to the Catholic Church, having concluded a *foedus* with the emperor by which the Vandals would defend the mainly Catholic population of the province. Instead, as well as exceeding their powers as *foederati*, they took positive action against Catholic leaders. The Visigoths, like the Vandals, attacked clergy and damaged churches when they took over parts of southern Spain in 455,¹⁰⁸ but the only Visigothic parallel with the exile of bishops in 437 was when Euric took over the Auvergne in 474/5 and prevented episcopal vacancies being filled.¹⁰⁹ Sidonius Apollinaris, bishop of Clermont, and other leading bishops were banished. Euric too was claiming territorial authority over conquered land whilst his authority rested on a now hollow *foedus* with the emperor.¹¹⁰

Sidonius gives us a Catholic view of Euric's invasion and by comparison and contrast with the African situation helps us to put the

latter in perspective. Sidonius' expressed aim was to maintain the episcopal college and through this to hold onto the Catholic faith, even if they could not enjoy the political protection of the *foedus*.¹¹¹ Sidonius described Euric as more like a leader of a sect than a leader of a people.¹¹² We may deduce that Euric had ceased to be merely a leader of a federate people and was now claiming territorial authority in a conquered land in which the rearguard of the old authority still remained, that is the leaders of the Roman and Catholic Church. Within the new kingdom such a body was a potential fifth column. The destinies of the Empire and the Catholic Church were so intimately bound up that they had become parts of the same body politic. This is why the Germanic peoples needed a counter-Church as part and parcel of their own political authority and beyond this as the essential element in their own social identity and their destiny as a people. The Catholic Church in North Africa represented a similar kind of threat to the Vandals who had settled there and who were trying to extend their authority over the land on which they had been settled. The African Catholic Church, like that in the Auvergne, as we shall see, was also concerned to maintain its episcopal college and the cohesion of its organisation. It was this at which Gaiseric struck.

It is noteworthy that Euric, like Constantine and Clovis, put his victories down to divine guidance.¹¹³ Likewise Gaiseric and his successor Huneric considered their authority as God-given.¹¹⁴ Worldly success only served to confirm their claim to divine guidance and the correctness of their belief and hence increase the fervour of the conquerors. As the Arian bishop Maximinus said to the Catholic bishop

Cerealis, according to the *Contra Maximinum*, probably written in the early part of Gaiseric's reign, 'Do you see what your sins do? Because of them God has deserted you'.¹¹⁵ The Arians clearly felt they were favoured in the eyes of God, while the Catholics were suffering in their error.

Gaiseric's secure position in Africa allowed him to behave with ebullience and confidence in the religious sphere. In his opposition to the Catholicism of the Empire, religious and political motives became indissoluble. If Euric could be considered as appearing like the leader of a sect by Gallic Catholics, so much more must Gaiseric have appeared to have been in Africa, who, in 437, in the same year as he exiled Catholic bishops from their towns, tortured and killed five Hispano-Romans who were good friends of his, because they would not convert from Catholicism to Arianism.¹¹⁶ Clearly, Gaiseric wished that at least his *comites* and close advisers should be Arians. Yet, not even Euric, the most expansionist and supposedly the most aggressively Arian of the Visigothic kings, was given to proselytising his belief.¹¹⁷ There are only a very few isolated cases of such enthusiastic behaviour in the history of Germanic Arianism in the western Empire to put beside Vandal actions.¹¹⁸

Yet with the capture of Carthage in 439 and with the treaty of 442 ascertaining his territorial security, Gaiseric or those under his command went beyond this policy of forcing his own men to convert. In 440 while Gaiseric was besieging Palermo we learn that a certain *Maximinus dux Arrianorum* was forcing Catholics to become Arians in

Sicily. Some gave way, others underwent martyrdom.¹¹⁹ It is quite possible that this was the same Maximinus, who came with Gothic confederates to Africa as their Arian bishop in 427/8 and who held a controversy with Augustine.¹²⁰ He is also perhaps the same as the Arian bishop Maximinus with whom the Catholic bishop Cerealis of Castellum held a controversy.¹²¹ If indeed this is the same person, Maximinus may well have been an important influence on the formation of the Vandal Arian Church which was clearly coming into its own from the late 430's. The establishment of a counter-Church was an integral part of the permanent settlement of the Conquest, though we have no further parallels to the degree of enthusiasm that Maximinus is meant to have exhibited in Sicily.

c) Gaiseric's relations with the Catholic Church

With his conquest of Carthage, Gaiseric drove out the bishop, Quodvultdeus and the clergy of Carthage and confiscated all the churches within the city walls and some others.¹²² The bishop of Carthage, Quodvultdeus, along with other Catholic clergy, finished up in exile in Naples.¹²³ In one of the works which purport to be written by Quodvultdeus, the *Liber de Promissionibus et Praedicationibus Dei*, we are told that the Arians were now seen 'seducing many either by temporal power or by the wiles of evil genius or by abstinence and frugality'.¹²⁴ So far as 'temporal power and evil efforts' go, the author is clearly implying the kind of methods which we know Gaiseric's successors used - that is a combination of bullying and force and persuasion and

enticements. Material benefits were offered to converts, such as wealth, land, offices and advantageous marriages.¹²⁵ There was clearly much to be gained from becoming Arian. Yet in Gaiseric's reign it is difficult to gauge to what degree force and enticement were used to make ordinary laypeople convert to Arianism. Our sources either give us too vague and general a picture, as in the *Liber de Promissionibus*, or, as in the case of Victor of Vita, tell us mainly of the persecution of clergy and of leading figures at the king's court.

Victor's information about events in Gaiseric's reign has to be treated with a certain reservation in so far as he was very much against the Arians and Vandals and was, of course, selective about his information. However, the detailed information and cases of persecution he gives can be allowed some credence, even if his generalisations are probably exaggerations. Several events such as the sacking of Rome in 455,¹²⁶ the election of Deogratias, as bishop of Carthage in 454¹²⁷ and the embassy of Severus at the end of Gaiseric's reign¹²⁸ can be supported by other sources. Victor's work will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Four.

Victor tells us that edicts were issued by Gaiseric forbidding Catholic clergy to hold meetings or pray or hold mass or even reside in the *sortes Vandalorum*, that is Proconsularis.¹²⁹ This must have been soon after 442 when Vandals were settled there. Clergy were no doubt exiled though Victor does not give us details. It is from this time that we have inscriptions of ecclesiastics, one at least of whom was from Carthage and exiled in Madauros which was just over the border of

Proconsularis in Numidia Proconsularis.¹²⁰ Their deaths fell in the sixth year of Carthage, which would be 444/5 so that they must have been exiled before that time, probably soon after 439 but possibly after 442 since they all appear to have died in 444/5. In those regions which paid tribute to the palace - that is, Byzacena and eastern Numidia, several bishops were exiled and on their deaths their sees were left vacant.¹²¹

If we accept that the betrothal of Huneric and Eudocia followed on from the treaty of 442 and that hence there were good relations between Gaiseric and Valentinian III up till the latter's death in 455, then it is necessary to admit that this entente did not prevent some persecution of the Catholic Church in Africa, in view of the issue of the edict and the exile of some clergy, even though during this same period there is little mention of raidings by the Vandals.¹²² Beside these cases we can probably put that of Sebastianus, a Roman military commander, who had fled from Spain to Africa possibly in 440, but probably in 445. Sebastianus became an adviser to Gaiseric, who attempted unsuccessfully to make him an Arian; this, then is likely to have taken place after 442. Later Gaiseric had Sebastianus killed for another reason in 450.¹²³

That this period was not one of complete tolerance towards the Catholic Church is corroborated by our knowledge that the author of the *Liber de Promissionibus*, who was probably bishop Quodvultdeus of Carthage, was still in exile in Campania at the time of writing between 445 and 451.¹²⁴ In this work the author referred to the Arians and Vandals as precursors of Antichrist, giving no suggestion of improved

conditions for the Catholic Church¹³⁶ and does not appear to have been recalled before he was replaced after his death. Victor merely tells us that after exiling some bishops from the palatine provinces, Gaiseric allowed the election of a new bishop of Carthage in 454 as a result of diplomatic negotiations with Valentinian III, who died in 455.¹³⁶ The new Catholic bishop of Carthage was Deogratias, who held the see from 454 to 457.¹³⁷ However, after the death of Deogratias, Gaiseric issued a law forbidding the ordination of bishops in Proconsularis.¹³⁸ Clearly, his original laws forbidding Catholic clergy to reside in Proconsularis had not been effective or had been executed ineffectively, so requiring new laws. This may also have been a result of the entente between Gaiseric and the western emperor.

Victor tells us that there had formerly been 164 bishops in Proconsularis, but that by the time of writing there were only three.¹³⁹ Allowing for exaggeration and inaccuracy, this suggests that the enforcement of this law may have been more efficient after 457. Victor and other sources demonstrate a greater degree of violence against the Catholics after the death of Valentinian III in 455 which was also reflected in the renewal of raiding abroad which began again, so far as we can tell, with the sack of Rome in 455.

Some time after this law, Gaiseric sent a certain Proculus into Proconsularis, who forced the Catholic clergy to hand over their liturgical equipment and religious books, going to the lengths of turning the altar cloths into shirts and trousers.¹⁴⁰ Victor mentions one old bishop who was exiled for resisting.¹⁴¹ Also around this time

(Victor is vague even on his relative chronology but this was clearly after 457 and probably in the 460's) illegal celebrations of Easter mass were violently broken up by armed Arian Vandals in four places, one of which we know was in Proconsularis. Clergy were killed.¹⁴²

Another restriction placed upon the religious freedom of Catholics was that funerals had to be conducted without singing.¹⁴³ Hymns and religious songs were perhaps seen as a seductive means of asserting the Catholic faith and expressing Christian passive resistance by bearing witness to the faith, in a way reminiscent of the stand of Ambrose' congregation chanting hymns in vigil when the Arian Empress Justina attempted to take over their church in Milan.¹⁴⁴ Clerics would also be exiled if in their sermons they mentioned biblical figures like Pharoah, Nabuchadnezzar or Holofernes, since these were considered to be veiled references to Gaiseric as a tyrant.¹⁴⁵ The Vandals obviously feared that such biblical parallels as Pharoah and Holofernes could lead to sanctioned tyrannicide. It is worth noting that Sidonius also compared Euric to Pharoah.¹⁴⁶ Nabuchadnezzar was, of course the king of Babylonia who, according to 2 Kings:24-5, captured the city of Jerusalem and took treasures from the Temple. This was a useful way of portraying Gaiseric, the seizer and violator of Catholic churches.

The expedient of exiling clergy on the first known occasion in 437 meant driving them from their sees.¹⁴⁷ But from 439 on, we regularly hear of Catholic ecclesiastics being exiled overseas.¹⁴⁸ Gaiseric clearly wanted them where they could be no trouble to him. Exile became a standard policy. Gaiseric felt he could not arbitrarily execute

Catholics. As Victor tells us in one case, one Arian cleric (who became the Arian patriarch of Carthage) advised against killing a Catholic courtier Armogast because 'the Romans would call him a martyr'.¹⁴⁹ Thus a martyred Catholic might become even more influential, even if only passively, as a focus of opposition to Arianism and hence of Gaiseric. Gaiseric realised the limits to the reduction of Catholicism within his kingdom.

Around the same time, on the persuasion of his bishops, Gaiseric ordered that only Arians should officiate at his own court and those of his sons, Huneric and Theodoric.¹⁵⁰ There were clearly still a number of Catholics in high positions, so that the earlier similar attempts cannot have been intensive or continuous. One courtier, Armogast, judging from his name, may well have been a Vandal or from a Germanic background.¹⁵¹ Other Catholic Vandals persecuted by Gaiseric are mentioned in Book Three of Victor's work.¹⁵² Armogast was an official at the court of Gaiseric's son Theodoric. He was tortured and made to dig ditches in Byzacena and was later made a cowherd outside Carthage where everyone could see him. The *procurator* of Theodoric's court, Felix, venerated Armogast as an apostle according to Victor, and was a Catholic himself, yet there is no mention of his being forced to convert.¹⁵³ This suggests that the application of this law may also have been selective and discriminatory. This seems to receive support from the fact that Satorus, the *procurator* of the court of Huneric, Gaiseric's other son, did suffer torture, though he would not convert to Arianism even when his wife was given to a camel owner.¹⁵⁴

This inconsistency would point towards factors other than religious allegiance as operative in determining the victimisation of the persecuted. The vicissitudes of court politics would seem the most likely cause.¹⁵⁵ Victor, in accordance with the vehemently pro-Catholic aim of his work, obviously couched all motives in cases of victimisation in terms of religious allegiance, though no doubt, this was always one of the motives. However, this appearance of selective persecution by Gaiseric might be put down to Victor's selection of the material he had available to him. Indeed, nearly all our knowledge of Gaiseric's persecution comes from Victor.

The only examples of persecuted Catholics who were not either clerics or high-ranking officials are the cases of Mascula and of Maxima and Martinianus. Mascula was an *archimimus* (and in fact may have been a courtier) against whom Gaiseric used first temptations then threats to convert, but since he stood firm in his faith, the Arians feared to kill him, lest he become a martyr.¹⁵⁶ One can understand the reluctance of the king to make a martyr of a popular theatre player.¹⁵⁷

Maxima was the head housekeeper for a Vandal *millenarius*, no doubt a slave of Roman origin; likewise Martinianus was the weaponmaker of the *millenarius*.¹⁵⁸ Not wishing to consummate the marriage which their master had arranged as she had dedicated herself to God, Maxima suggested that they run away. They fled to separate male and female monasteries in Thabraca in northern Proconsularis.¹⁵⁹ Here they were pursued, and at least Maxima and other members of her monastery were tortured and, *quod gravius est*, the Vandals attempted to forcibly

rebaptise them.¹⁶⁰ When the slaves were returned to their owner, divine vengeance led to his destitution; when transferred to another owner, they began to have a similar effect, so Gaiseric had them sent to a Moorish king Capsur in an area of the desert called Caprapicti.¹⁶¹ 'Then it is thought that what happened', according to Victor, was that the ex-slaves began to convert the Moors and sent off to a Roman town for priests. A church was built and many were baptised, but when Capsur told this to Gaiseric, he had them tied to horses and dragged across the ground until dead.¹⁶² Obviously this is a highly romanticised story, even though there are probably elements of truth in it. It can hardly be used as an example of Gaiseric's attitude towards the Catholic populace in general.

Whether, then, Gaiseric actually did persecute only Catholic clergy and high officials or whether this was merely the impression Victor wished to give because as the leaders of Catholic society these groups of people would make the most sensational cases is open to question. In support of Victor's representation being a fair one it must be said that for the period of Huneric's reign, Victor gives examples of victims drawn from a larger spread of social and political types.¹⁶³ It is clear that Victor was not so well informed about Gaiseric's reign on the whole as about Huneric's reign but he was still able to provide concrete examples and was clearly socially well-connected enough to have known at least the general picture.¹⁶⁴ As far as his propagandising purposes went any further angle to the persecution would have been grist to his mill. This picture of selective persecution in Gaiseric's reign

is also supported by the statement of Victor of Tonnena in his *Chronicon* that Huneric persecuted the Catholics more than his father.¹⁶⁵

It would be fair to deduce from the picture given by Victor and the other Catholic authors that if, initially, the violence against the Catholic Church displayed by the Vandals during the invasions can be explained by other than directly religious motives, with the establishment of the Vandal kingdom and of an institutionalised Arian counter-Church, the Catholic Church was no longer recognised and became a representative of the old order which pre-existed the present dominant political force and was extraneous to it. The African Catholic Church continued to owe its allegiance to the Empire-wide Catholic Church and beyond this to the Empire itself. The majority of Romano-Africans must have owed their religious allegiance to the Church of the Catholics so that it could not be easily eradicated. It also came to represent Roman values with which many Romano-Africans continued to identify.

Gaiseric employed a religious policy noticeably reminiscent of his territorial policy. These 'policies' had at one and the same time the appearance of confident and ebullient expansionism and of a fearful defence against an enemy larger than itself, though temporarily weaker. They were clearly born of the same needs and circumstances. Gaiseric set himself up in a position of authority in his African provinces unparalleled by any other barbarian leader. So too did he seek to establish the Arian clergy in a dominant position as an integral part of that authority. The Romano-Africans were his subjects and so too were the clergy of the Catholic Church.¹⁶⁶ The Arian Church was not merely

inward-looking, existing to serve only the Vandal people while leaving the Catholic Church to serve the Roman population.

Gaiseric established undisputed control over his African core lands of Proconsularis (in particular, Carthage) and the palatine provinces and hegemony over the surrounding Moorish-controlled regions and the Mediterranean islands.¹⁶⁷ Yet, though he appeared confident and expansionist, Gaiseric realised that there was a practical limit to the needs and abilities of the Vandals. He had had fairly friendly relations with the western emperor Valentinian III, and appears to have limited his aggression against the Empire and against the Catholic Church in Africa from around 445 until Valentinian died in 455. Gaiseric realised this limit when he signed the perpetual peace with Emperor Zeno in 474. He knew well that the Empire was not a dead letter and could marshal greater resources than his own given good conditions and leadership. He had been prepared to negotiate with the Emperor Leo in 468 with the arrival of Basiliscus' fleet.¹⁶⁸ A flawed strategy by Basiliscus had saved Gaiseric, along with Vandal guile.¹⁶⁹ In 474, Gaiseric was happy to settle for confirmed control over the ring of Mediterranean islands and the hegemony of the western Mediterranean which this would give him to provide a forward defence against any assault on his African lands. Any raiding beyond this appears to have been in search of booty. Gaiseric had taken advantage of the weakness of the Empire in the mid-fifth century and attack became the best form of defence.¹⁷⁰

We see a similar strategy in Gaiseric's religious politics. In Proconsularis and Carthage, the core area where the Vandals were most

numerous, Catholic services and Catholic clergy were banned. But while this was a bold move, before 455 it does not seem to have been executed effectively or uniformly. In 454, Gaiseric succumbed to pressure from Valentinian III for a Catholic bishop of Carthage.¹⁷¹ In political parallel to this, before 455 the Vandals only raided the Mediterranean islands and did not take permanent control of them.

From the death of Valentinian III in 455, with the western Empire under a rapid succession of puppet emperors backed by the *Magister Militum*, Ricimer, the Vandals took control of the *ambitus totius Africae* and Sardinia and the Balearics; from this time we hear of a more continual and effective persecution of the Catholic Church in Proconsularis. Nevertheless, the defensive and limited nature of this persecution is still clear. The exile of clergy appears to be the usual policy of removing Catholic presence rather than outright slaughter, which would produce martyrs as a focus of resilience and sympathy. The policy of exiling Catholics to the desert seems to have begun in Gaiseric's reign¹⁷² and that of exiling abroad certainly was. Clearly these were considered safe zones on the periphery of the kingdom or outside it, where such trouble-makers would be little threat to the main Vandal lands. With the leaders removed it became easier to induce the remaining population to join the Arians. There appears to be little evidence of forced rebaptism or physical persecution of the Catholic populace as a whole, though this may be due partly to the general sparsity of our evidence.

The other social group which was a target of persecution was that of office-holders in the king's court. Here again Gaiseric's policy of converting his courtiers and advisers to Arianism bears the same characteristics. Even here, his execution of this policy appears to have been spasmodic and not applied continuously. When he issued a law to this effect in the latter part of his reign, its application appears, in fact, to have been selective. Certainly, Huneric struck out against court officials who were Catholics, no doubt in some part left over from Gaiseric's reign.¹⁷³ These included Vandal Catholics in whose case persecution by Gaiseric had not been effective in achieving conversion.¹⁷⁴ Though Gaiseric appears to have gone further than any other Germanic king in attempting to convert his advisers and courtiers to Arianism, he must have not been able to feel that he could execute this policy uniformly. He clearly needed the assistance of Romano-Africans in order effectively to rule his primarily Romano-African subjects; some of these, at least, were not prepared to give up their religious profession, which amounted to an essential element in their identity in order to hold their positions.

One of the reasons behind encouraging conversion was that it proved allegiance to the Vandal order in North Africa and prevented the creation of a Catholic and pro-Constantinople faction at court and reduced the possibility of treasonous activity. It is noticeable that Gaiseric was quite prepared to kill as well as torture close friends and officials who were not prepared to convert.¹⁷⁵ We can see at once both an offensive and defensive motive behind such actions. At other times,

Gaiseric was clearly prepared to tolerate officials who were Catholic because of their usefulness to him.

There were clearly various factors which might lead to variations in the degree of application of the laws, including internal political factors. Victor's account of the execution of the *comes* Sebastianus gives us an example. Victor tells us that Gaiseric held the advice of Sebastianus, the son-in-law of Boniface, *comes Africae* in the 420's, as essential, but at the same time feared his presence.¹⁷⁶ This is hardly surprising, considering that Sebastianus was something of a soldier of fortune who had been in Spain and Constantinople, as Hydatius informs us.¹⁷⁷ We know that Boniface himself had married a formerly Arian woman, Pelagia, and that one of his daughters had been baptised as an Arian; thus Gaiseric may have considered that there was a good chance of Sebastianus' conversion.¹⁷⁸ Gaiseric had already had Sebastianus swear to stick faithfully with the Vandals but clearly felt the need for more assurance and so demanded he become an Arian. Sebastianus refused with a pious argument. Gaiseric later had him killed over another argument.¹⁷⁹ Clearly, the desire to bind Sebastianus to himself through conversion arose through fear of treason from a man whose counsel he greatly needed. Conversion would lend an important religious sanction to his bond of service to Gaiseric and would dissociate Sebastianus from his former allies. As a Catholic, he was too suspect.

External political factors must also have affected the application of the laws. The apparent laxness of execution of laws against the Catholic Church between 445 and 455 was clearly in part, at

least, an end product of Gaiseric's rapprochement with Valentinian. Gaiseric's application of the law ordering all court officials to become Arian, may well have happened in the 460's amidst substantiated military threats from the Empire in 460 and 468. The existence of many Catholics in court service in the early 480's may well have been the product of peaceful relations with the Empire following the treaty of 474. Some time not so long before 474, Gaiseric had sent into exile all of the clergy of the church of Carthage and closed the churches but with the embassy of Severus from Zeno which established the perpetual peace, all the clergy were returned.¹⁰⁰

d) The ecclesiastical organisation and teaching of the Arians in the Vandal kingdom

Our Catholic sources inevitably show us all the negative and violent aspects of conversion. However, there were certainly more positive aspects to Arian religiosity at this time. The worldly success of the Arians was obviously a powerful argument for the correctness of their piety. However, one of the Pseudo-Quodvultdeus sermons considers that Catholics might be seduced by the abstinence and frugality of the Arians.¹⁰¹ This is interesting because it coincides with what Salvian tells us of the Vandals around 440, that is, that the Vandals closed the houses of pleasure, forced prostitutes to marry and suppressed homosexuality.¹⁰² Though Salvian felt he had a moral mission to shame the Romans into chastity and clean living, we need not doubt that there is a core of truth in his information. Such behaviour might be put down

to social and religious taboos amongst the Vandals and must have impressed some Romans, at least.¹⁸³ Procopius writing in the 540's, however, was of the opinion that the Vandals quickly adopted the refinements of Roman habits and gave themselves up to all sorts of erotic activity.¹⁸⁴ Allowing for some dramatic exaggeration this would hardly be unlikely. Certainly, we know that theatres and circuses remained open in the late fifth century and that Vandals attended baths, places traditionally known for libertinism.¹⁸⁵

Our sources tell us little about the details of Arian proselytism beyond the use of material and coercive means. We can however, glean something about the structure of the Arian Church. At its head, we can assume, was the so-called 'patriarch' of Carthage,¹⁸⁶ while beneath him were the bishops who might attend the king as advisers.¹⁸⁷ Besides these, we hear of priests and deacons.¹⁸⁸ Arian priests were to be found officiating on rural estates.¹⁸⁹ The Arian Church in Africa appears to have been under the aegis of the king (who felt himself in a position to have his 'patriarch' publicly burned and to promote a *notarius* to bishop)¹⁹⁰ though it appears to have worked in cooperation with other Arian Churches such as that of the Ostrogoths and that in Thrace.¹⁹¹

The liturgy of the Arians in Africa appears to have been held in a form of the Gothic language, which must have been an important element of their identity; even Roman Arians appear to have used Gothic.¹⁹² We do, however, also have Arian sermons in Latin and this must have become a common feature as the Church became swollen by Latin-

speaking converts.¹⁹³ However, the *lingua/religio* nexus must have become something of an issue,¹⁹⁴ since at the Conference at Carthage in 484 between the Arians and Catholics, the Arian patriarch, Cyrila, pretended he did not know Latin, though he clearly did.¹⁹⁵ Since it was intended to be an expanding, proselytising Church, the Arian Church could not be intransigently monoglot, just as effective government of the Vandal realm could not have been conducted solely in the Vandal language. Controversies between Arians and Catholics were obviously held in Latin with Latin citations from the Scriptures.¹⁹⁶ We know that Germanic Arians possessed Gothic-Latin bilingual Bibles.¹⁹⁷ Much of the teaching of the Arian church probably differed little from that of the Catholic Church, though our information on Arian teaching is very sparse. Arian writers were not averse to drawing from writings of Catholic Fathers, as we have seen in the case of Fastidiosus.¹⁹⁸ It was in the realm of Trinitarian theology that Arian teaching differed markedly from Catholic.¹⁹⁹

Correct belief concerning the nature of the Trinity was considered essential for salvation and for the very definition of the true Church.²⁰⁰ On this point, the two Churches were apparently implacable and intransigent and it is with Trinitarian theology that most surviving Catholic writings are concerned. Indeed, it is from these writings that nearly all of our knowledge of Vandal Arianism is derived. They show that controversies between Arians and Catholic were sometimes held in the form of literary exchanges, such as the writings of the bishop of Ruspe, Fulgentius' *Contra Fabianum* and other lost works of his referred to in the *Vita Fulgentii*.²⁰¹ Sometimes controversies might be

held in the form of questions posed by Arians to Catholic clergy, which might be answered orally and then written up, as in Cerealis' *Contra Maximinum*, or just answered in written form, such as the *Solutiones Objectionum Arrianorum* and Fulgentius' *Responsiones* to objections put by king Thrasamund.²⁰² Some dialogues are more formalised and artificial, such as the *Altercatio cum Pascentio* or Vigilius, bishop of Thapsus' *Contra Arianos, Sabellianos et Photinianos*.²⁰³

Clearly, direct questions or statements are the most reliable indications of Arian arguments. Unfortunately, we have only a few examples of this in the *Objectiones* of king Thrasamund and the *Sermo Fastidiosus*. Catholic accounts of questions which Arians might pose to Catholics, such as those found in the *Contra Varimadum*, can usually be trusted since the works themselves were intended as educational guides, though they might also present caricatures of Arian arguments.

Vandal Arianism can best be viewed within the general context of Germanic Arianism, since it displays the same doctrinal stance towards the Trinity. Indeed, Germanic Arianism is probably better viewed as a historical phenomenon than as a theological one, being the form of Christianity that Ulfila took to the Goths, but one, importantly, that set it apart from the Nicaean Catholicism that came to dominate in the Roman Empire. One of the important characteristics of Germanic Arianism was its clearer doctrinal stance than that of Alexandrian Arianism. On the whole the Germanic Arians of the fifth century enjoyed a greater freedom of worship than earlier Arians and did not need to hide behind ambiguous formulae such as that of the Council of Rimini of 361.²⁰⁴

Arianism after Rimini is particularly marked by the denial of the divinity of the Holy Spirit as well as the Son. It is this form of double subordinationism that marks Germanic Arianism. Later Arians believed that Christ differs from God, not only in person, but also in substance and nature.²⁰⁵ The form of divinity that Christ possesses was of an inferior derivative kind to that of God because he was created by the Father.²⁰⁶ He is a subject and minister of God.²⁰⁷ He possesses all the prerogatives and perfections of the Father but at an inferior level because of his creation by the Father.²⁰⁸

The relation of subjection which characterises the Son with respect to the Father also characterised that of the Holy Spirit to the Son, as being the creation of the Son. It is different in person, substance and nature from the Son because of its procession from Him.²⁰⁹ Unlike the Son, the Spirit is neither God nor Lord.²¹⁰ It is in the area of the inferiority of the Holy Spirit that we have evidence in African Catholic texts of a radicalism in Vandal Arianism which may have been characteristic of it. For instance, in the *Contra Varimadum*, a collection of Arian questions and Catholic answers, one putative question refers to the submission of the spirit of the prophets to the prophets themselves and also records passages from Acts of the Apostles where the apostles administer baptism in the name of Christ without mentioning the Holy Spirit.²¹¹ Fulgentius tells us that some Arians maintained that the spirit named in the baptismal formula was not the Paraclete Spirit but another generic spirit of God.²¹² The Arian statements of belief cited in the *Contra Varimadum* denied that the Holy Spirit was *ubique diffusus* like the Son, but fulfilled its function

wherever it was locally required, teaching, sanctifying and illuminating.²¹² These may have been caricatures of actual Arian teaching in North Africa but they are suggestive of a more radical subordinationism.

All of this, of course, ran counter to the Catholic conception of the members of the Trinity being of one substance with the Father, equal in their divinity as in their other prerogatives and perfections, though having separate persons.²¹⁴

The general impression then is one of an ebullient and confident Arianism and an Arian Church with links with others around the Mediterranean, supported sometimes enthusiastically by the Vandal king. It does not appear to have taken any deep roots and we hear no more of it besides its dissolution after the defeat of the Vandals in 533.²¹⁵ However, this Church could clearly attract able minds to its cause. Even after freedom was returned to the Catholic Church in 523, Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe felt it necessary to answer the Arian Fabianus in ten books. Arians might refer to their Church as *sancta mater Ecclesia catholica*.²¹⁶ The Catholics were referred to as *homoousiani* because of their belief in all the members of the Trinity being of the same substance.²¹⁷ There was much objection to this term because it was not to be found in the Scriptures.²¹⁸

The two Churches would obviously each seek to defend themselves in the area in which their creeds clashed. However, within the Trinitarian controversy the wider racial and cultural conflict between

Vandal and Roman was sublimated and subsumed. This is not to deny the genuineness of belief involved in the conflict. On the contrary, profession of faith and identity were intimately linked. It is often precisely where faith and identity are threatened that they are most stressed. It is the degree of threat from both sides that led to the intense bitterness and hatred exhibited in the conflict between the two Churches, unparalleled in the barbarian west.

The Vandals, politically dominant but geographically isolated and seriously outnumbered by the Romano-Africans, sought to impose their Arian faith as far as they could upon the leading figures in the realm and by prohibiting the Catholic Church, at least in Proconsularis, they clearly sought to eliminate the Catholic threat and, perhaps, to induce the African populace to convert to Arianism. The Catholic Church imposed a threat to the Arian Church inadvertently in that it was the one to which most Romano-Africans adhered, and thus an integral part of that *romanitas* which threatened to absorb the politically dominant but, in terms of institutions of peace and culture, much less sophisticated Germanic peoples. The Catholic Church which the Arians were confronted by was extensive and organised with a strong awareness of its own traditions and identity as well as of its own catholicity. However, the plight of the Catholic Church in North Africa was dependent upon the relative strength and weakness of the imperial and the Vandal power. In the course of the Gaiseric's reign, the political support of the Empire ebbed away and the African Catholic Church was thrown back on its own resources.

CHAPTER 2 NOTES

- 1) Courtois 155-64. See ch.2 appendix below 127 and n.26.
- 2) The existence of Alans alongside the Vandals is clear from the full title of the king as *rex Vandalorum et Alanorum* first applied to Gaiseric (Ps.-Prosper of Aquitaine *Chronicon - Continuatio codicis Alcobaciensis* a.455, MGH a.a.9 487). See Courtois 237 n.7. For a Sueve amongst the Vandals see Courtois Appendix 2:70 375. For Hispano-Romans see Prosper *Chronicon* 1329, MGH a.a.9 475-6.
- 3) Possidius *Vita Augustini* 28.10-12 (208-10).
- 4) Capreolus *Ep.*1.1, PL 53 845.
- 5) Prosper *Chronicon* 1321, MGH a.a.9 474. For Spain in relation to the *foedus* with the Empire of 412; Hydatius *Chronicon* 49, MGH a.a. 11 18.
- 6) Isidore of Seville *Historia Vandalorum* 74, MGH a.a.11 297 defined the area as *partem Africae quam... possederunt*. We know that Gaiseric could eject bishops from Sitifis, the capital of Mauretania Sitifensis and Calama in Numidia Proconsularis (see n.7) and that the Vandals held Hippo; Prosper *Chronicon* 1321, MGH a.a.9 474; see Courtois 169-70. Numidia Consularis was the western part of Numidia controlled from Cirta, sometimes known as Numidia Militiana, because it was controlled by a military *praeses* in charge of the Third Legion under the late Empire. Numidia Proconsularis consisted of the *Regio Hipponiensis* controlled by the legate of the Proconsul in Hippo and the *tractus Tevestinus* appended to the former. For the relevance of these subdivisions to the Vandal period and after see J.Desanges 'Permanence d'une structure indigène en marge de l'administration romaine: la Numidie traditionnelle' *AntAfr* 15 (1980) 77-89.

- 7) Prosper *Chronicon* 1327, MGH a.a.9 475.
- 8) Pliny the Elder *Historia Naturalis* 15.2(3) ed.C.Mayhoff (Leipzig, 1909); Victor 1.3 (2); Salvian of Marseilles *De Gubernatione Dei* 6.12.68, SC 220 406.
- 9) See Courtois 171 n.4. *Chronicon Gallicanum* a.452/129, MGH a.a.9 660, Hydatius *Chronicon* 115, MGH a.a.11 23.
- 10) Victor 1.13 (4).
- 11) Procopius *Wars* 3.4.13 (36, 38). This text appears to refer to the treaty of 442. See Courtois 173 n.10 and F.M.Clover 'Flavius Merobaudes: A Translation and Historical Commentary' *Transactions of the American Philological Society* n.s.61.1 (Philadelphia, 1971) 53-4, who considers that Gaiseric was given the status of 'friend and ally' through a continued *foedus*. Cf. however N.Duval 'Culte monarchique dans l'Afrique vandale: culte des rois ou culte des empereurs?' *REA* 30 (1984) 271-2 for emphasis upon the autonomy of the Vandal kingdom from the emperor from 442.
- 12) Victor 1.13 (4). See Courtois 173-4. For this placing of Abaritana and Gaetulia see J.Desanges 'Un témoignage peu connu de Procope sur la Numidie vandale et byzantine' *Byzantion* 33 (1963) 49-56. Courtois considers Gaetulia to include southern Byzacena.
- 13) *Novella Valentiniani* 13 of 445, *Leges Novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes* ed. P.Meyer (Berlin, 1954) 95-6; Courtois 175.
- 14) *Novella Valentiniani* 24 of 451, *Leges Novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes* 140-1.
- 15) Prosper *Chronicon* 1348, MGH a.a.9 479.
- 16) Victor 1.13 (4) shows this to have followed immediately on from the treaty of 442.

- 17) See K.Ziegler art. *Zeugitana regio*, *RE* Band 10A (Munich, 1972) 251.
- 18) Victor 1.29 (8).
- 19) Victor 1.13 (4).
- 20) See n.13.
- 21) Victor 2.28 (19).
- 22) C.Mohrmann and F.van der Meer *Atlas of the Early Christian World* (London, 1958) Plate 22. Indeed, these may have been border-towns between the *sortes* and Numidia, since Procopius includes them in a list of Numidian fortified towns, *Buildings* 6.7.1-11, tr.H.B.Dewing Loeb Classical Library (London/Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1954) 388, 390. Cf. Desanges 'La Numidie traditionnelle' 86-9, who does not consider the evidence for the *sortes Vandalorum*. He does, however, support the idea that Numidia, both *Consularis* and *Proconsularis*, were considered together as one geographical and, sometimes, administrative entity by long tradition, extending into the Byzantine period.
- 23) VF 6.14 (37).
- 24) VF 7.17 (45).
- 25) VF 8.1 (47).
- 26) With the highest possible estimate of armed soldiers at eighty thousand (that of Victor) which is clearly exaggerated (see Appendix below 127), and with a liberal multiplier of five to calculate the total population of Vandals, there would be four hundred thousand Vandals. The true number of the Vandals was likely to have been a fraction of this. A fair estimate of the Romano-African population of *Proconsularis*, the most densely urbanised and prosperous area of Africa, would be about one million (see Courtois 218 n.6 and J-M. Lassère *Ubique Populus: peuple et mouvements de population dans l'Afrique romaine de la chute de Carthage*

à la fin de la dynastie des Sévères (146 a.C-235 p.C) (Paris, 1977) 647-62 esp.647 and 651). Courtois' estimation of the population of late Roman Africa as a whole as about three million is effectively the lowest. See C.Lepelley 'Peuplement et richesses de l'Afrique romaine tardive' in *Hommes et Richesses dans l'empire byzantine. Tome 1, IV-VII siècles* Realités byzantines (Paris, 1989) 17-33.

27) Procopius Wars 3.5.11 (50).

28) Procopius Wars 3.5.15 (50).

29) Procopius Wars 3.5.14 (50). Goffart's thesis in *Romans and Barbarians: the Techniques of Accommodation* (Princeton, 1980) that it was not land that was allotted to Gaiseric's followers but tax revenues has found support, e.g. from J.Durliat 'Le salaire de la paix sociale dans les royaumes barbares (Ve-VIe siècles)' in H.Wolfram and A.Schwarzc eds. *Anerkennung und Integration. Zu den wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen der Völkerwanderungszeit 400-600. Berichte des Symposions der Kommission für Frühmittelalterforschung, 7. bis 9. Mai 1986, Zwettl* (Vienna, 1988) 40-5. I remain unconvinced. Victor stated that Gaiseric divided up Proconsularis into hereditary lots. Considering the probability that no foedus was involved, Gaiseric was quite free to make large-scale confiscations. According to Procopius the richest landowners were deprived of their land while others were left only with the bad land and were taxed heavily (see n.28). This still fits in with large-scale expropriation in Proconsularis. Even if the argument of Goffart and Durliat is correct, this does not change the general impression that the Vandal population was concentrated in Proconsularis, which is the most important consideration here.

- 30) On enslavement of nobles, Victor 1.14 (5); *Sermo De Tempore Barbarico* 2.5.11-13, CCSL 60 ed.R.Braun (Turnhout,1974) ; VF 1.2 (11).
On the flight of nobility see, e.g., Theodoret of Cyrrhus *Epp.* 31 and 36, SC 98 ed.Y.Azéma (Paris, 1964) 90-2, 98-100; VF 1.2 (11).
- 31) Victor 1.13 (4), later referred to in 1.22 (6) as *regiones palatio tributa pendebant*.
- 32) See G.G.Koenig 'Wandalische Grabfunde des 5. und 6. Jahrhunderts' *Madridrer Mitteilungen* 22 (1981) 299-360, esp. 340-1.
- 33) Salvian of Marseilles *De Gubernatione Dei* 6.12.68, SC 220 406
vastatis urbibus mari clausis et eversis Sardinia ac Sicilia, id est fiscalibus horreis, atque abscisis velut vitalibus venis ,African ipsam, id est quasi animam captivavere reipublicae. On the Vandals' probable capture of the *annonae* ships see Courtois 207-8.
- 34) E.g. Prosper *Chronicon* 1375 on the raid on Rome in 455, MGH a.a.9 484 and Courtois 195-6.
- 35) Merobaudes *Carmen* 1 17-18, 2 13-14 see Clover 'Flavius Merobaudes' 11, 23-4, 28, 53-4, who considers that the betrothal took place c.443, soon after the treaty. E.Stein *Histoire du Bas-Empire* tr. J.R.Palanque (Paris, 1959) 1 326 dates the betrothal to 445. Courtois 396 dates it to between 442 and 445. It would seem then that the betrothal led on from the treaty and took place fairly soon after. For the 'wary entente' see F.M.Clover *Gaiseric the Statesman: A Study of Vandal foreign policy* Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (University of Chicago, 1966) 103-37.
- 36) Victor 1.13 (4).
- 37) See Courtois 176-8.
- 38) See Courtois 177 and the inscription in Courtois Appendix 2:68 375. Procopius dates the Moorish involvement in Vandal raids from 455; *Vars*

- 3.5.22 (52). They shared in the spoils Victor 1.25 (7). There were Moorish allies in the Chott el Hodna region in Huneric's time (477-484) Victor 2.28 (19); Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* 479.1, MGH a.a.11 189.
- 39) Leo *Sermo* 54, PL 54 433; Prosper *Chronicon* 1375 MGH a.a.9 484.
- 40) Prosper as n.26; Hydatius *Chronicon* 167 MGH a.a. 11 28.
- 41) John Malalas *Chronographia* 14, ed.L.Dindorf *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 8 (Bonn, 1831) 374-5; Cassiodorus *Chronicon* 1293, MGH a.a.11 158; Marcellinus Comes *Chronicon* a.472.2, MGH a.a.11 90.
- 42) Prosper *Chronicon* 1344, MGH a.a.9 476.
- 43) Hydatius *Chronicon* 200, MGH a.a.11 31.
- 44) Priscus fr. 42, Blockley 2 364.
- 45) See Courtois 187 and 192.
- 46) Victor 1.51 (13); Procopius *Wars* 3.5.22-5 (52, 4).
- 47) Malchus fr.5, Blockley 2 410; Procopius *Wars* 3.7.26 (70, 72). Courtois 396.
- 48) Cf. e.g. Courtois 204; H.-J.Diesner *Das Vandalenreich: Aufstieg und Untergang* (Berlin, 1966) 48-9; Stein *Histoire du Bas-Empire* 1 362.
- 49) Gaiseric appears to have gained complete control of Sicily after 468 but in 476 gave it in vassalage to Odovacer in return for tribute, Victor 1.14 (4). In 491, a new treaty was made with king Theodoric the Ostrogoth who had taken Italy from Odovacer, the clauses of this treaty are unknown (Cassiodorus *Chronicon* 1327 MGH a.a.11 159), but by 500, Theodoric had gained complete sovereignty over it since he then granted the region of Lilybaeum to Thrasamund on his marriage to Theodoric's sister, Amalafrida in that year; Procopius *Wars* 3.8.13 (76).
- 50) It is noticeable that even Vandals suffered in the famine of 484 described by Victor 3.59 (55). On the importance of Sicily as a granary

in this period, Salvian *De Gubernatione Dei* 6.12.68 (see n.30); on Sardinia, Symmachus *Ep.* 9.42 ed. O. Seeck (Berlin, 1961) 248 and *Expositio Totius Mundi* in *Geographi latini minores* ed. A. Riese (Heilbronn, 1878) 126.

51) Procopius tells us that there were eighty *millenarii* made but for a number of fifty thousand not eighty thousand men, *Wars* 3.5.18-9 (52). The eighty *millenarii* would, of course fit with the figure of eighty thousand, see below 127 and Courtois 217. Even if the *millenarii* were just in charge of the fighting men, the dependents of the warriors would have been necessarily associated with their *millenarius*. The number under their command need not, of course, have been a complete thousand.

52) Victor 2.14 (16), 2.28 (19), 3.30 (48). See H.-J. Diesner 'Comes, domesticus, minister(ialis) im Vandalenreich' *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 40 (1966) 174-6.

53) Victor 2.15 (16), 2.43 (23) and Courtois 253.

54) Victor 2.3 (14), 3.19 (44).

55) *Veredarii*; Victor 2.38 (21), 3.2 (40), see H.-J. Diesner 'Zum Vandalische Post- und Verkehrswesen' *Philologus* 112 (1968) 282-7.

Baifuli; Fulgentius *Ad Thrasamundum* 1.1, CCSL 91 97. The *occulti nuntii* of VF 21.1 (103) suggest the existence of spies, which would hardly be surprising. Bodies of secret police such as the *agentes in rebus* were well known in the late Empire.

56) Victor 3.33 (48).

57) VF 1.11 (13), 14.2 (73).

58) Victor 1.43 (11), 1.48 (12).

59) Victor 2.10 (15).

60) Victor 3.27 (47), *Victorianum, tunc proconsulem Carthaginiis... Quo in Africae partibus nullus ditior fuit, qui etiam apud impium regem pro rebus semper sibi commissis fidelissimus... a rege familiariter dicitur...*

This was in 484. Dracontius the poet was a lawyer according to the traditional title *togatus fori proconsulis almae Kartaginis apud proconsulem Pacidelum* in the time of king Gunthamund (484-496) according to a subscription to one of his works, *Romulea* 5, MGH a.a.14 148.

61) Victor 3.13 (43), also 3.11 (42) and 3.12 (43). That such offices still existed at the time of the issuing of this law in 484 is strongly suggested by the heavier punishments threatened upon the *iudices* for tolerating Catholicism than was the case for the laws of Emperor Honorius against the Donatists on which these laws are modelled. Capital punishment was reserved for them in Huneric's laws when the heaviest fines for them in Honorius' laws was twenty pounds of gold. The harshness of the laws as applied to *iudices* suggest both that they were influential and were likely to be sympathetic to the Catholics. See M.Overbeck *Untersuchungen zum Afrikanischen Senatsadel in der Spätantike* (Kallmünz, 1973) 79-80.

62) See A.Chastagnol 'Les gouverneurs de Byzacène et de Tripolitaine' *AntAfr* 1 (1967) 132 and Courtois 258 n.6.

63) The Albertini Tablets are acts of sale dating to the reign of Gunthamund (484-96) of plots of land on the *fundus Tuletianus* in the south of Byzacena. They show that the prescriptions of the *lex Manciana* concerning the growing of olives in marginal lands continued to be applied, C.Courtois, L.Leschi, C.Perrat, C.Saumagne *Tablettes Albertini. Actes privés de l'époque vandale (fin de Ve siècle)* (Paris, 1952) 97-9.

- 64) This is clear from the laws issued for instance against the Catholics; Victor 2.39 (22) and 3.3-14 (40-3).
- 65) See R.Heuberger 'Vandalische Reicheskanzlei und Königsurkunden' *MIOeG* Ergänzungsband 11 (1929) 76-113.
- 66) *Anthologia Latina* 371 lines 10 and 14, ed.D.R. Shackleton Bailey (Stuttgart, 1982) 1.1 287: cf. M.Chalon, G.Devallet, P.Force, M.Griffe, J-M.Lassère, J.W.Michaud 'Memorable Factum: Une célébration de l'evergétisme des rois Vandales dans l'Anthologie Latine' *AntAfr* 21 (1985) 254.
- 67) See F.M.Clover 'L'année de Carthage et les débuts du monnayage vandale' in *113e Congrès national des Sociétés savantes, Strasbourg 1988, Quatrième Colloque national sur l'histoire et l'archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord* (Paris, 1989) 1 215-220. The dating by the year of Carthage was first used by Gaiseric from 439 but appears to have been used as a system of regnal dating also by Huneric and probably by other kings in association with their name, see M.Duval 'L'année de règne vandale et la monnayage en argent de Carthage' *REA* 34 (1988) 80-85; cf. F.M.Clover 'Felix Karthago' *DOP* 41 (1986) 10-15.
- 68) F.M.Clover 'Felix Karthago' 1-16.
- 69) This seems clear from the expectation that king Huneric had of the *ordines* applying his anti-catholic laws, Victor 3.12 (42). In the imperially-controlled region of Mauretania and Numidia, Valentinian III's *Novella* 13 (.2) of 445 shows that public misfortunes, clearly relating to the Vandal invasion and occupation of the area, had oppressed the *curiales* since the cost of maintaining the imperial army was taken away from the *curiales* and put upon the landowners, *Leges novellae ad Theodosianum Pertinentes* 95.

70) The only examples of Vandal municipal epigraphy are the inscription on a fortification at Aïn Beïda in Numidia (Courtois, App.2:167 387), and probably the inscription relating to the construction of a bath by a certain Gebamund (?) at Tunes in Proconsularis (Courtois App.2:126 382). King Thrasamund's construction of his baths at Alianae no doubt also carried a dedicatory inscription - see Chalon et al. 'Memorable Factum' 215-9, 230.

71) For the problems of the lack of epigraphic evidence, see the rapport of M.Duval appended to C.Lepelley 'Peuplement et richesses' 31-3. Y.Thébert in 'L'évolution urbaine dans les provinces orientales de l'Afrique romaine tardif' *Opus 2* (1983) 99-131, has attempted to project the positive interpretation of Claude Lepelley of the vitality of towns in late Roman North Africa (*Les cités romaines de l'Afrique du Nord du Bas-Empire* (Paris, 1979-81) e.g.1 21-28) into the Vandal and Byzantine periods. However, even Thébert has had to admit to the shrinking of towns and the decline in their functions in this period; see 'Permanence et mutations des espaces urbains dans les villes de l'Afrique du Nord orientale: de la cité antique à la cité médiévale' *CT 34* (1986) 41-2. For a town which may have thrived in the Vandal period see M.Duval 'Observations sur l'urbanisme tardif de Sufetula (Tunisie)' *CT 12* (1964) 96-100. For towns which show evidence of decline see L.Maurin 'Thuburbo Maius et la paix vandale' *CT 15* (1967) 240-254 and A.Mahjoubi *Recherches d'histoire et d'archéologie à Henchir el-Fouar (Tunisie). La cité des Belalitati Maiores* (Tunis, 1978) 174-5, 209. For the recent finds in Carthage, which give a very mixed picture of the state of town life, see J.Humphrey 'Vandal and Byzantine Carthage' in J.G.Pedley ed. *New Lights on Ancient Carthage* (Ann Arbor, 1980) 85-120.

- 72) VF 1.1-3 (11).
- 73) VF 1.11 (13), 2.1 (15).
- 74) Overbeck *Afrikanischen Senatsadel* 53-5, 67-70.
- 75) A.Chastagnol and M.Duval 'Les survivances du culte impérial dans l'Afrique du Nord à l'époque vandale' in *Mélanges d'histoire ancienne offerts à William Seston* (Paris, 1974) 87-118; F.Clover 'Le culte des empereurs dans l'Afrique vandale' *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques* n.s. 15-16 (1979-80) [1984] 121-8 for the opinion that the cult was directed at the emperors; M.Duval 'Culte monarchique dans l'Afrique vandale: culte des rois ou culte des empereurs?' *REA* 30 (1984) 269-73, who more plausibly argues that the cult was directed at the Vandal kings.
- 76) Dracontius *Satisfactio ad Gunthamundum* 93, MGH a.a.14 119. The offending work appears to be *Romulea* 8 128, MGH a.a. 14 155. The *dominus* to whom Dracontius wrote is normally considered to have been the Emperor Zeno (474-91); see D.Romano *Studi Draconziani* (Palermo, 1959) 9-23. However, F.Corsaro *Problemi storico-letterari del cristianesimo africano nel 5o secolo. Studi su Draconzio* (Catania, 1959) 5-7 considers that Odovacer was the more likely addressee.
- 77) E.g. M.Chalon et al. 'Memorable Factum' 211-236.
- 78) M.Rosenblum *Luxorius: A Latin Poet among the Vandals* (New York, 1962); H.Happ *Luxorius: Text. Untersuchungen. Kommentar* (Stuttgart, 1986).
- 79) For the school at Carthage, Dracontius *Romulea* 1.13, MGH a.a.14 133; Luxorius' poem, *Anthologia Latina* 282, 1.1 235-6. Fulgentius was taught Greek language and letters by his mother but Latin grammar at school in Thelepte, VF 1.4, 6-7 (11).

- 80) Cf. Fulgentius *Psalmus Abecedarius contra Arianos* CCSL 91A 884 line 249 and Victor 2.23 (18).
- 81) Procopius *Wars* 3.8.7, 15-29 (74-82), Corippus *Iohannis* 3.47-319.
- 82) See e.g. the description of the gardens of Oageis in *Anthologia Latina* 364, 1.1 283 and J.J.Rossiter 'Villas vandales: le suburbium de Carthage au début de VIe siècle de notre ère' in *113e Congrès national des Sociétés savantes, Strasbourg 1988, Quatrième Colloque sur l'histoire et l'archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord* (Paris, 1989) 1 221-7.
- 83) Orosius *Historiae adversum Paganos* 7.41.8, CSEL 5 554.
- 84) *Historia Francorum* 2.2, MGH s.r.m. 1.1. ed.B.Krusch and V.Levison (Hannover, 1951) 40.
- 85) This is demonstrated, for example, by the confused account that is given of the Vandals in this whole passage *Historia Francorum* 2.2, MGH s.r.m. 1.1 39-40.
- 86) Hydatius *Chronicon* 89, MGH a.a.11 21.
- 87) For the former opinion see L.Schmidt *Geschichte der Wandalen* 2nd ed. (Munich, 1942) 27; Courtois 56 n.4.
- 88) E.g. churches pillaged during the Gothic invasion of Italy in the 400's, Orosius *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 7.39.2, CSEL 5 545; *Liber Pontificalis* ed.L.Duchesne (Paris, 1955) 1 230 (4), 1 233 (17).
- 89) Hydatius *Chronicon* 89, MGH a.a.11 21.
- 90) Prosper *Chronicon* 1329 MGH a.a.9 475-6.
- 91) We cannot be certain when the Vandals became Arian. All we know is that some were Arian by 421, though they were enemies of the Arian Visigoths, H-E.Giesecke *Die Ostgermanen und der Arianismus* (Leipzig-Berlin, 1939) 167. Against the argument that the Vandals were converted in the Danubian provinces see Courtois 36 n.3.

92) See A. Isola 'Temi di impegno civile nell'omiletica africana di età vandalica' *VetChr* 22 (1985) 277-289.

93) Possidius *Vita Augustini* 28.10-13 (208-10); Ps.-Quodvultdeus *De Tempore Barbarico* 1 and 2, CCSL 60 ed. R. Braun (Turnhout, 1976) 423-37, 474-86; Victor 1.3-7 (2-3); *Sermo de Cypriano Martyre* PL 58 265. That women dedicated to God were violated seems clear from the letter of Pope Leo to Mauretanian bishops advising them to keep such women separate from the inviolate ones: Leo *Ep.* 12.11, PL 54 655. For archaeological evidence of the burning of churches at Rusguniae (Mauretania Caesariensis) and Thelepte (Byzacena) see Duval *Eglises africaines* 1 21-8, 222.

94) Victor 1.10 (4). We do not hear of the Vandals taking over Catholic churches for their own use as Arian churches until they had taken Carthage. While *foederati* they could have invoked the edict of 386 of Valentinian II which expressly granted the Arian barbarians the freedom to practice their cult (*Codex Theodosianus* 16.1.4, *Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus* 2nd ed. ed. T. Mommsen (Berlin, 1954) 834) see H. Wolfram *History of the Goths* 2nd ed. Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1987) 197 n.204. The *foedus*, however, did not extend to Carthage, but this purpose may underlie some of the earlier violence against Catholics. Cf. Giesecke *Ostgermanen und Arianismus* 171.

95) C. Courtois *Victor de Vita et son oeuvre* (Algiers, 1954) 70.

96) See below 185-91.

97) Victor 1.5-6 (3).

98) See further 85; Augustine *Ep.* 228, CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher (Vienna, 1911) 484-96, reproduced verbatim in Possidius' *Vita Augustini* 30 (212-34) to remind its readers of this advice. The *Vita* was written

some time after 432 - that is after the fourteen-month siege (*Vita Augustini* 28.12 (208)). That Augustine's advice was heeded by clergy would seem to be demonstrated in the case of Tipasa, a town in Mauretania. King Huneric (477-84), sent an Arian bishop to be instated in the town. Most inhabitants reacted by sailing away to Spain. However, those that were not able to, the Arian bishop attempted to persuade to become Arian, then when they resisted threatened them, those remaining replied by holding Mass. When the king heard of this defiance he sent a count who had the tongues of the recalcitrant cut out. They miraculously, however, continued to be able to speak. That these were led by Catholic clergy seems clear from the fact that the most famous confessor (whose fame had spread from Byzantium whence they had gone) was the subdeacon Reparatus. A priest would also have been needed to hold Mass. The core of this story, which may well have had a historical basis, suggests that the Catholic clergy here were following Augustine's advice and remaining behind with those of their flock who were in danger and providing them with the consolation and sacraments they needed in their difficulties and also providing leadership and religious resistance in adversity (*Victor* 3.29-30 (47-8)).

99) Leo *Ep.* 12.6, PL 54 653A.

100) Optatus of Milev *De Schismate Donatistarum* 2.21, CSEL 26 57.

101) This was the situation that Augustine envisaged in *Ep.* 228. Jerome *Ep.* 123.15, CSEL 56 ed. I. Hilberg (Vienna, 1918) 92 tells us that many men had been slaughtered within the church in Mainz by barbarians (who at that time may well have been pagan).

102) *Victor* 1.10 (4).

103) Augustine Ep.228, CSEL 57 474-496; Theodoret of Cyrrhus Epp.52 and 53, SC 98 128-30.

104) There must have been at least some clergy who conscientiously stood by their posts and bore witness to the faith, judging from the references to torturing, killing and burning; see n.83. See below 130-2, 137-41, 153-6 and Isola 'Temi di impegno civile' 285-7.

105) E.g. Ps.-Prosper *Carmen de Providentia Divina* 27-62 ed. M.P.McHugh (Washington, 1964) 260-2.

106) E.g., Victor 1.9 (3); Possidius *Vita Augustini* 28.5-6, 206; *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.5.11-13, CCSL 60 477, referred to as Arians (by implication) 2.14, CCSL 60 485. For the dating of this sermon see D.Franks *Die Werke des heiligen Quodvultdeus Bischofs von Karthago, gestorben um 453* Veröffentlichten aus dem kirchenhistorischen Seminar 4.9 (Munich, 1920) 15.

107) Victor 1.27 (7).

108) Hydatius *Chronicon* 174 and 186, MGH a.a.11 29-30; K.Schäferdiek *Die Kirchen in den Reiche der Westgoten und Suewen* (Berlin, 1967) 12 n.23.

109) Sidonius Apollinaris Ep.7.6.7, MGH a.a.8 ed.C.Lütjohann (Berlin, 1887) 109.

110) Ep.7.6.4, MGH a.a.8 109; Wolfram *History of the Goths* 198.

111) Ep.7.6.7-10, MGH a.a.8 109-10.

112) Ep.7.6.6, MGH a.a.8 109.

113) See n.112.

114) Gaiseric - Jordanes *Getica* 169, MGH a.a.5.1. ed.T.Mommsen (Berlin,1882) 102. Huneric - Victor 2.39 (22), 3.14 (43).

115) Cerealis, bishop of Castellum (province uncertain) *Contra Maximum Arrianum Episcopum* PL 58 757-68 esp.757A. This work has often been

considered to date to around 484, merely because it is stated that Cerealis was on his way to Carthage and so it has been assumed this was for the Council of Carthage in 484, (see e.g. Dekkers *Clavis Patrum Latinorum* 142-3; P.Courcelle *Histoire littéraire des grandes invasions germaniques* 3rd. ed. (Paris, 1964) 192). However, there were no doubt several reasons for a cleric to go to Carthage. Bishop Victor of Cartenna in Mauretania for instance wrote a book against the Arians which he offered to Gaiseric *per suos*, supposedly through some of his clergy, Gennadius of Marseilles *De Viris Illustribus* 78 ed.G.Herding (Leipzig, 1924) 102. The statement in the introduction of Cerealis' work *quia vicinior est illis civitatibus quae Dei furore inarserunt, regales pulsavit aures eius adventus* (757A), would argue for a date close to the period of the only known example of such destruction, since the memory and physical traces of it were still evident. Therefore a date in the earlier part of Gaiseric's reign would be more suitable than around 484. For a similar sentiment voiced by Arians to Catholics see Victor 3.65 (57) *Isti dicunt mihi cotidie: ubi est deus tuus.*

116) Prosper *Chronicon* 1329, MGH a.a.9 475-6.

117) Wolfram *History of the Goths* 200.

118) Gregory of Tours *Gloria Confessorum* 47 MGH s.r.m.1.2 (forced conversion by a Visigoth); Eugippius *Vita Severini* 8.1-2 SC 374 ed.P.Régerat (Paris, 1991) 198-200. The wife of the late sixth century Visigothic king Leovigild, Goswintha, tried to force the Frankish wife of the king's brother Hermenigild, Ingundis to convert from Catholicism to Arianism; Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 5.38, MGH s.r.m 1.1 230. Leovigild also tried to force bishop Mazona of Merida; *Vitae Patrum Emeretensium* 4.3-8 in J.N.Garvin (ed.) *The 'Vitas sanctorum patrum*

- Emeretensium'*. Text and translation Catholic University of America.
- Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Latin language and literature 19
(Washington, 1946) 198-200. Leovigild may have also tried to force the
conversion of other Catholic bishops; Isidore of Seville *Historia*
Gothorum 50, MGH a.a.11 287-8.
- 119) Hydatius *Chronicon* 120, MGH a.a.11 23.
- 120) For the argument that they were one and the same person see
L.J.Van der Lof 'Der fanatische Arianismus der Vandalen' *Zeitschrift für*
Neutestamentliche Studien 64 (1973) 146-151; M.Meslin *Les Ariens*
d'Occident, 335-430 (Paris, 1967) 95-6. The earlier dating of Cerealis'
Contra Maximinum makes this identification more feasible.
- 121) This is possible considering the importance of Maximinus as *dux*
Arrianorum and considering the argument in n.115 that Cerealis' work is
more likely to date from the earlier part of Gaiseric's reign.
- 122) Victor 1.9 (3), 1.15-16 (5), see L.Ennabli 'Topographie chrétienne
de Carthage: l'apport de l'épigraphie' *CEA* 18 (1986) 43-63.
- 123) Victor 1.15 (5).
- 124) *Liber de Promissionibus: Dimidium Temporis* 5 (7), CCSL 60
ed.R.Braun (Turnhout, 1976) 194-5. For the attribution of the work to
Quodvultdeus see Quodvultdeus *De Promesses et Predications de Dieu* SC
101 ed.R.Braun (Paris, 1967) 88-113.
- 125) E.g. Victor 1.48 (12), 3.29 (48); Fulgentius *Psalmus Abecedarius*
contra Arianos 236-241, CCSL 91A 883; Procopius *Wars* 3.8.9-11 (74, 76).
- 126) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.455, MGH a.a.11 186.
- 127) Pseudo-Prosper *Chronicon - Continuatio codicis Reichenaviensis* MGH
a.a.9 490.
- 128) Victor 1.51 (13); Malchus fr.5, Blockley 2 410.

129) Victor 1.22 (6). I take *nostrī* in this passage to refer to Catholic clergy rather than Catholics as a whole in accordance with Daniel 3.38 cited by Victor in relation to this passage - 'there is neither prince nor prophet nor leader in this time, nor place to sacrifice in your name'.

130) ILCV 1457 (278) - *anno VI K(arthagini)s die VIII kal. Augustas F(laviu)s Anul. Ipresbliter servus domns s(e)d(is) Kar(tha)gs veniens K(a)r apud col. Madauros defunctus est in pace fidelis vixit an.*

[...]III feliciter; 1590A (306); 1601A (308) - Donatianus prsb. in exilio pro fide catolica hic apud col. Mad(auros) relegatus recessit die nonas Apriles an. VI Karthag(i)n(is) vixit annis XCVI; 1601B (308).

Flavius came from Carthage, the others may have also, or if not, were probably from Proconsularis. It is notable that Madauros was not far over the border of Proconsularis into Numidia Proconsularis. It would appear likely then, considering the absence of any king's name, that the exiled clergy known from Madauros were exiled in Gaiseric's reign. See n.67.

131) Victor 1.22-3 (6-7).

132) For this period see Victor's account from 1.12-23 (4-7).

133) Victor 1.19-21 (5-6). See Hydatius *Chronicon* 99, 104 and esp. 129, 132, MGH a.a.11 22, 24. Hydatius gives Sebastianus' arrival in Africa as 445, Prosper *Chronicon* MGH a.a.9 478 gives the date as 440. I would be inclined to follow Hydatius, along with PLRE 983-4, since Hydatius seems to know much of Sebastianus' movements. For support of Prosper's dating see J.L.M de Lepper *De Rebus Gestis Bonifatii Comititis Africae et Magistri Militum* (Tilburg-Breda, 1941) 109-112.

134) Ch.3 n.31.

- 135) See below 150-53.
- 136) Victor 1.24-7 (7).
- 137) Victor 1.27 (7), Pseudo-Prosper *Chronicon-Continuatio codicis Reichenaviensis* MGH a.a.9 490.
- 138) Victor 1.28-9 (7-8). For Gaiseric's relations with the Catholics after 455, see Courtois 290-2.
- 139) Victor 1.29 (8); see Ch.6 n.59.
- 140) Victor 1.39 (10).
- 141) Victor 1.40 (10).
- 142) Victor 1.41-2 (10-11).
- 143) Victor 1.16 (5).
- 144) Paulinus of Milan *Vita Ambrosii* 13 ed.A.A.R.Bastiaensen (Rome, 1975) 68-70. Very partisan songs like Fulgentius' *Psalmus Abecedarius contra Arianos*, CCSL 91A 877-95 may also have been the target of Gaiseric's prohibition.
- 145) Victor 1.22 (6).
- 146) Sidonius Ep.7.6.4, MGH a.a.8 109.
- 147) Prosper *Chronicon* 1327, MGH a.a.9 475.
- 148) The first case is Quodvultdeus, bishop of Carthage and others: Victor 1.15 (5). Perhaps the author of *Contra Varimadum* can be included amongst these: Preface, CCSL 90 9. Cyprianus was an African bishop 'compelled by the savagery of the barbarians to wander in foreign lands', Theodoret of Cyrrhus Ep.53, SC 98 130. A case can also be made for bishop Gaudentius of Abitinae in Proconsularis who according to tradition founded a monastery in Naples *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* 6 (Rome, 1965) 66-7 (article by G.Ambrasi). It is noticeably only priests that we know of exiled to Madauros supposedly from their province of

Proconsularis, that is, it would seem, just outside the *sortes Vandalorum* (see n.130).

149) Victor 1.44 (11); cf. also 1.47 (12).

150) Victor 1.43 (11).

151) M.Schönfeld *Wörterbuch der altgermanischen Personen- und Völkernamen* (Heidelberg, 1911) 31-2. Although there are known examples of people of Vandal stock adopting Roman names, e.g. *Felix... natione barbarus*, VF 6.1 (35), we have no proven examples of the reverse, though mixed marriages must have eventually occurred. If he was a Roman with a Vandal name, he could really be no more than forty, if these events took place in the 470's.

152) The Catholic wife of the *cellarita regis*, Dagila was most likely a Vandal, Victor 3.33 (48-9).

153) Victor 1.43-6 (11).

154) Victor 1.48-50 (12-13).

155) We know that Gaiseric also did away with his brother's wife and their sons for more obviously political reasons, Victor 2.15 (16).

156) Victor 1.47 (12).

157) See R.C.Beecham *The Roman Theatre and its Audience* (London, 1991) 136-8, 192-8.

158) Victor 1.30 (8).

159) Victor 1.31-2 (8).

160) Victor 1.33-4 (8-9).

161) Victor 1.35 (9).

162) Victor 1.36-8 (9-10).

163) These include *negotiatores*, Victor 3.41 (50-1); *medici*, 3.24 (46); 3.50 (53); women, 3.21 (45); choir boys, 3.39-40 (50); Vandals 3.31

(48); Huneric's own close relations 2.14 (16). For the direction of persecution predominantly at *honestiores* see e.g. H.-J. Diesner 'Sklaven und Verbannte. Martyren und Confessoren bei Victor Vitensis' *Philologus* 106 (1962) 107-11.

164) On Victor's knowledge through his own personal acquaintance see e.g. 1.14 (5), 1.23 (6), 1.35 (9) - *nobis etiam nequaquam ignota*, 1.40 (10).

165) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.466, MGH a.a.11 187.

166) Hence Gaiseric's ability to legislate against the presence of Catholic clergy in the *sortes Vandalorum* and his attempts to enforce these laws. One law of Huneric referred to *universis populis nostro regno subiectis*, Victor 3.3 (40). This would include both Vandals and Romano-Africans.

167) The episode in 1.37 (9-10) shows that Moorish leaders under Gaiseric might fall into some kind of client relationship. Victor 2.28 (19) shows that there was also some kind of agreement between Huneric and the Moors in the Chott el Hodna area (for the region of their origin see Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* 479.1, MGH a.a.11 189; Courtois *Victor de Vita* 39).

168) Procopius *Wars* 3.6.11-13 (58).

169) Procopius *Wars* 3.6.12-21 (58, 60). Procopius' account of the war would seem to be derived from Priscus; Blockley 1 115 and Courtois 203.

170) See e.g. Clover *Gaiseric the Statesman* 224-6.

171) Victor 1.24 (7).

172) Victor 1.35 (9).

173) Victor 2.8-11 (15).

174) See n.152. Also Victor 3.38 (50).

- 175) E.g. the Hispano-Romans, Prosper *Chronicon* 1329, MGH a.a.9 475-6.
 Comes Sebastianus, Victor 1.19-21 (5-6).
- 176) Victor 1.19 (5).
- 177) See n.133.
- 178) Augustine *Ep.*220.3-4, CSEL 57 431-3; see PLRE 2 856-7.
- 179) Victor 1.19-21 (5-6).
- 180) Victor 1.51 (13). Malchus fr.5, Blockley 2 410.
- 181) See n.124.
- 182) Salvian *De Gubernatione Dei* 7.87-90, 94-100, SC 220 492-502.
- 183) Jordanes tells us that Gaiseric had simple tastes (*Getica* 168, MGH a.a.5.1 102) and so he may have been one of the mainsprings of this policy.
- 184) Procopius *Wars* 4.6.6-9 (256).
- 185) We hear of king Huneric attending baths: Victor 3.16 (44), and we know that king Thasamund built baths at Alianae *Anthologia Latina* 201-5, 1.1 150-3. For an Arian (called Olympius) at the baths of Helenianae (probably the same as Alianae) see Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.498, MGH a.a.11 193. As to theatre, *Mascula*, the *archimimus*, appears to have been part of Gaiseric's entourage, Victor 1.47 (12), cf. 1.43 (11).
- 186) Victor 2.13 (16), 2.54-5 (25).
- 187) E.g. Victor 1.19 (5-6).
- 188) E.g. Victor 2.1 (13).
- 189) VF 6.1 (35).
- 190) Victor 2.13 (16); 3.29 (47-8).
- 191) As far as the Ostrogothic Arian establishment is concerned, the only proof of any relation with Vandal Arians is that Gothic-Latin bilingual texts coming from Italy may have been influenced by African

Latin biblical texts in Gothic as well as Latin. There are grounds for supposing that the Palatinus and Bobbiensis MSS were based upon Vandalic-Latin bilingual texts; see G.W.S.Friedrichsen 'The Gothic text of Luke in its relation to the Codex Brixianus (f) and the Codex Palatinus (e)' *New Testament Studies* 11 (1964-5) 281-290, esp.290. Proof of relations with Arians in the East, especially Thrace and Constantinople, comes from Victor 2.3-4 (15) and 2.24 (18). For relations during Gaiseric's reign, Priscus 5.31, Blockley 2 332-4, tells us that the Emperor Marcian (450-7) sent as an ambassador to Gaiseric Bleda, 'a bishop of Gaiseric's own heresy' who, unsuccessful, was sent away by Gaiseric. This seems to have happened shortly after the raid on Rome in 455.

192) The *Altercatio cum Pascentio Arriano*, PL 33 1156-62, is considered to have been written under the Vandals (e.g.Courtois 223 n.3), although the work purports to be a controversy between Augustine and count Pascentius which really did take place, several details are incorrect in relation to the account of Possidius' *Vita Augustini* 17 (170-4); see PL 33 1154. The concern with *lingua barbara* strongly suggests that the author lived under the Vandals. The only other occasion when knowledge of Gothic liturgy might have been picked up would have been in the years between 427 and 439 when there would have been Gothic confederates in the eastern part of Africa. These communities would have been small and closed in comparison with the Vandal ones and few Romans would have been likely to have been involved with them in the way that the *altercatio* states, '*licet dicere.... Barbaris lingua sua, sed etiam Romanis, 'Sihora armen', quod interpretatur, 'Domine, miserere'*' (PL 33 1162).

- 193) *Sermo Fastidiosi* CCSL 91A 280-3. The Latin Arian sermons in *Veronensis* 51 might also be from North Africa; see CCSL 87 xx.
- 194) This connection was clearly felt to be important: Huneric in his letter to Emperor Zeno expected the Arian communities in the east to be allowed to conduct their services in 'whichever language they wished', Victor 2.4 (14). It was clearly an important part of their identity. Salvian mentions Vandal scriptures, *De Gubernatione Dei* 7.11.46, SC 220 462.
- 195) Victor 2.55 (25).
- 196) E.g. *Cerealis Contra Maximinum* PL 58 757-68; *Obiectiones Regis Thrasamundi* CCSL 91 67-70; *Contra Varimadum* CCSL 90 1-134; *Contra Fabianum* CCSL 91A e.g. fr. 16, 787 line 13, fr. 22, 798 lines 1-2.
- 197) See n. 191.
- 198) This is true of the collection of Arian sermons on the holy days in *Veronensis* 51; see n. 193.
- 199) Cf. Fulgentius *Contra Fastidiosum* 10, CCSL 91 295-6 lines 451-464. For the borrowings in the Arian sermons in *Veronensis* 51 see CCSL 87 69, 77, 78. R. Gryson *Le recueil arien de Vérone* (Paris, 1985) 28 considers that the whole of the *Collectio Veronensis* had been compiled in an Arian milieu, probably in North Africa (see n. 193). This *Collectio* included sermons on the gospels which had no Arian traits. Also amongst these documents are a *Contra Hereticos* (aimed mainly at Catholics), a *Contra Iudaeos* and a *Contra Paganos*.
- 200) See e.g., *Sermo Fastidiosi* CCSL 91 280-3. For the Catholic point of view e.g. Fulgentius *De Fide ad Petrum* 47-64, CCSL 91A 744-751.
- 201) E.g. Fulgentius *Contra Fabianum* CCSL 91A 763-870 and the lost works referred to in VF 21.11-13 (105).

- 202) E.g. *Solutiones Obiectionum Arrianorum*, CCSL 90 141-223;
Obiectiones Regis Thrasamundi and Fulgentius *Responsiones* to them, CCSL
91 67-94. *Cerealis Contra Maximinum*, PL 58 757-68 is the record of an
oral answer by the bishop taken down by a third person.
- 203) E.g. *Altercatio cum Pascentio*, PL 33 1158-62; Vigilius of Thapsus
Contra Arianos, Sabellianos, Photinianos dialogus, PL 62 179-238.
- 204) See e.g. M.Simonetti 'Arianesimo Latino' *Studi Medievali* 3rd series
8.2 (1967) 685.
- 205) Substance: e.g. *Contra Varimadum* 1.44, CCSL 90 56; nature, *Contra*
Varimadum 1.61 CCSL 90 71; *Solutiones Obiectionum Arrianorum* 21, CCSL 90
166.
- 206) E.g. *Obiectiones Regis Thrasamundi* CCSL 91 67. *Sermo Fastidiosi* 3
CCSL 91 281-2; see Simonetti 'Arianesimo Latino' 689-90, 701.
- 207) Christ as minister *Contra Varimadum* 1.46, CCSL 90 57; as subject,
Contra Varimadum 1.23, CCSL 90 35.
- 208) E.g. *Contra Varimadum* 1.47, CCSL 90 58; 1.69, CCSL 90 78-9. See
Simonetti 'Arianesimo Latino' 719-23.
- 209) E.g. *Contra Varimadum* 2.1, CCSL 90 82; 2.9, CCSL 90 89; 2.11, CCSL
90 90; 2.13, CCSL 90 93-4.
- 210) E.g. *Contra Varimadum* 2.10, CCSL 90 91; *De Trinitate* 9, CCSL 90 252-
7.
- 211) *Contra Varimadum* 2.4, CCSL 90 85-6; 2.19, CCSL 90 100.
- 212) Fulgentius *Contra Fabianum* fr.29.7, CCSL 91A 818.
- 213) *Contra Varimadum* 2.15, CCSL 90 97.
- 214) Book 3 of the *Contra Varimadum*, CCSL 90 101-34, lists all the
divine attributes as they are to be found in each of the three members
of the Trinity.

215) Cf. e.g. Giesecke *Ostgermanen und Arianismus* 172.

216) R.g., *Sermo Fastidiosus* 3, CCSL 91 281 line 43.

217) See e.g. Victor 3.4 (40).

218) See e.g. *Altercatio cum Pascentio* PL 33 1158-62.

Chapter 2 Appendix

The number of Vandals in Africa

According to Victor 1.2 (2), 'Gaiseric, intending to make the reputation of his people a source of dread, ordered then and there that the entire crowd was to be counted... including old men, young men and children, slaves and masters, there was found to be a total of 80 000. News of this is spread widely, until today those ignorant of the matter think that this is the number of their armed men, although their number is now small and feeble'. That this traditional number of 80 000 continued to spread, but was differently interpreted, seems clear from Procopius' calculation that the Vandals had eighty *millenarii* making it appear that they had 80 000 fighting men 'though the number was said in former times to be no more than 50 000 men' (Wars 3.5.18-9 (52)). Victor, a near contemporary of the event accounted above, adopted an inclusive interpretation of the figure, wishing to correct the interpretation which maximised the number of Vandals.

Courtois 215-7 agrees with L.Schmidt 'Zur Frage nach der Volkszahl der Vandalen' *ByzZ* 15 (1906) 620-1 against the assertion of J.Haury 'Über die Stärke der Vandalen in Afrika' *ByzZ* 14 (1905) 527-8 that the figure of 80 000 was that of Vandal males. Goffart *Barbarians and Romans* 230-3 considers that this figure is merely a poetic and unreliable one. Bearing in mind the practical and logistical problems of transporting such a large number of people, it would seem probable that the Vandals numbered in tens rather than hundreds of thousands.

CHAPTER 3

Reactions and Responses of the Catholic Church to the Vandal Invasion and Domination

This chapter will consider the circumstances in which the African Catholic Church found itself, how it reacted and attempted to adapt itself to the changes that the Vandal invasion brought about and in what ways it tried to compensate for its loss of political and economic support.

a) Augustine and after

As can be expected, the immediate responses to the Vandal invasion were mixed, and reflect in different ways on the resilience of the Church. The faintheartedness and desire to flee before the invading Vandals clearly exhibited by at least some of the Catholic clergy may have been symptomatic of a Church whose congregations lacked cohesion because of the absorption of large and no doubt passive Donatist communities.¹ These signs of lack of leadership may also have been the result of the low calibre and unsuitability of some recent recruits to the Catholic clergy.²

At the same time, the reason we know about the failings of clergy is because the topic was such a matter of concern. Augustine's Ep.228 to bishop Honoratus of Thiaba reiterated advice which he had

already given to another bishop who had sought his opinion. Augustine stated that 'we should fear more that members of the body of Christ should be killed, bereft of spiritual sustenance, than that the members of our body should suffer as a result of enemy invasion - not because these things should not be avoided when they can, but because they should be borne when they cannot be avoided without impiety'.³ Clergy should first fulfil their essential spiritual duties such as baptism, reconciliation, consolation and the sacraments, and instruction in penitence, which would never be in more demand than in such times of calamity. It was only when this ministry could be satisfactorily fulfilled by others that a member of the clergy should follow the precept in Matth. 10:23, 'When they persecute you in this city, flee to another'.⁴

The flight of clergy was obviously a perennial problem in times of persecution, and we know of several members of the clergy found abroad during the Vandal period.⁵ The *Notitia Provinciae* of c.484 notes that twenty-seven out of 466 bishops mentioned had fled.⁶ Such flight clearly continued into the late Vandal period, since a letter of an African council to Pope John II of 535 requested that the bishop of Rome should not hold communion with African bishops who did not have letters of commendation from their primates since they no longer had the excuse of persecution for doing this.⁷ Apart from clergy fleeing abroad, they might also flee to the mountains. One priest who had fled persecutions in Huneric's time was found dead in a cave.⁸

Fleeing clergy could have called upon the precedents of many past African ecclesiastical authors who had written in defence of their decisions to flee from persecution. One was the fourth-century Christian writer, Lactantius, who had portrayed such flight as imitation of Christ. Cyprian argued that his presence in Carthage during the Decian persecution might have created trouble since he was a marked man. He also considered that an important sacrifice was being made in abandoning material security and by avoiding apostasy it was possible to maintain a good relation with God. The glory of such refugees came only second to that of martyrs.⁹ Cyprian had a good and specific cause for flight which may have fulfilled Augustine's criteria. However, his belief in the general value of flight from persecution makes him much more positive about it than was Augustine. That Augustine was more rigorous in his opposition to the flight of clergy than were clerics by the end of the Vandal period would seem to follow from the repetition of a canon of the Council of Sardica in the *Breviatio Canonum* of Ferrandus of Carthage in the following unqualified form: 'that anyone who wishes to stay in another town through fear of persecution, should not be prohibited'.¹⁰

Augustine's death in August 430 deprived the African Catholic Church of its greatest spiritual leader. His torch appears to have been passed on to his surviving followers. Possidius, Augustine's biographer, included Ep.228 as the penultimate chapter of his *Vita Augustini*, considering it 'very useful and necessary for the conduct of priests and ministers of God'.¹¹ Such an uncompromising emphasis on the spiritual duties of the clergy was felt by Possidius to be still apposite when he

himself wrote, that is, sometime in the decade or so after 432.¹² Possidius had taken refuge within the walls of Hippo with the remnants of his flock, along with other bishops, in accordance with Augustine's advice.¹³ In 437, he was exiled from his see along with other bishops, including Novatus of Sitifis, possibly also a monk-bishop from Augustine's monastery at Hippo and definitely an admirer of his¹⁴ (the exile cannot have been too prolonged however, since Novatus appears to have been buried back in Sitifis in 440).¹⁵

If Possidius took over the lead from Augustine in the matter of an uncompromising maintenance of his spiritual duties in the face of adversity, not even he could unequivocally share Augustine's spiritual and stoical attitude towards the physical calamity which the Vandal invasions brought on the Catholic Church; according to Augustine, 'we should fear more lest with our interior sense corrupted, the chastity of faith should perish, than that women should be violently defiled in the flesh, since chastity is not violated by violence if it is served by the mind... We should fear more lest the living stones should be extinguished by our desertion than that stones and wood of earthly buildings should be burned in our presence'.¹⁶

In *Vita Augustini* Chapter 28, Possidius himself was naturally very concerned about the physical destruction, violence and death which the Vandals were seen to bring with them, as were all contemporary African ecclesiastical writers.¹⁷ Their spiritual, moral and cultural values could not be dissociated from their physical setting - the towns, churches and their ministers. As Possidius claimed, Augustine did not

feel or think like other men, but in a loftier and more profound way.¹⁸ To most literate people of the time, however, the Vandal invasion was seen to threaten a complete overturning of a way of life for leading Romano-Africans and a great loss of vested interests. This must have lead to great confusion and to radically different responses. If some clergy fled, a core remained, concerned with the maintenance of their pastoral duties.

Augustine had envisaged severe problems inflicting the organisation of the Church, with congregations divided between those fleeing and those remaining. This appears to have been realised in practice.¹⁹ Clergy and churches may have become the targets of Vandal violence as the foci of passive civil resistance.²⁰ It should be recalled that some clergy were enslaved, others exiled.²¹ In Augustine's view the sacraments would never have been more in demand than in such a crisis as this. Some communities then would have been left leaderless by fleeing clergy. The danger was that the most conscientious pastors would have been most exposed to violence and death.²²

Differences of opinion may have arisen within local church communities and within the Church hierarchy between those who had adopted a conscientious and uncompromising stance in fulfilling their duties and protecting the Church's moral and physical fabric and those who compromised with the enemy or fled from them. This is what had happened in the time of Cyprian during the Decian persecution and in the aftermath of the Diocletianic persecution.²³ Clearly such conflicts of opinion would have been exacerbated by the inability to assemble the

machinery of ecclesiastical discipline or enforce its enactments (one might recall the impossibility of sending bishops to the Council of Ephesus).²⁴ Problems of communication during the Vandal invasion and under Vandal rule could only have helped to loosen the provincial structure of the Catholic Church. Differences of opinion both on the local and provincial level must also have been complicated and worsened by the prohibitions against Catholic clergy in Proconsularis and their harassment there and elsewhere.

Particularly after 455, the threat to the very existence of the Catholic Church in Proconsularis must have been great. Opportunities to hold meetings for worship or to make new ordinations must have been made much more difficult and the policing of such activities by the rulers much easier, within the *sortes Vandalarum*.²⁵ Perhaps one of the greatest calamities for the Catholic Church was that it had been at its strongest precisely in the area in which it was now most troubled, that is in Proconsularis.²⁶ One of the most notable tendencies that can be discerned from the surviving religious writings of the century or so following the Vandal invasion is that their authors came not from the Numidia of Augustine and the Donatists, nor really from Proconsularis, except for Carthage itself, but rather from Byzacena.²⁷ The particular concern that the Vandal kings showed about the activities of the Catholics in Proconsularis seem to have taken their toll upon the Church there in this respect as well as in the general dislocation of the organisation of the Church, as we have seen.

Mauretania and western Numidia were under imperial control from 442 until 455, after which time this area appears to have passed under Moorish control. This area still fell nominally under the aegis of the African Church, ecclesiastically-speaking. These provinces provided a number of ecclesiastical writers, some of whom wrote against the Arians. One such, Victor, bishop of Cartenna, wrote a work against the Arians specifically addressed to Gaiseric.²⁸ Evidence of the cults of Roman saints, such as Lawrence and Peter and Paul, also suggests a bolstering of Roman influence.²⁹ It is worth recalling that landowners from Proconsularis and Byzacena had been offered land here by Valentinian III, and Catholic clerics may have fled here. They may well have helped to provide moral and material support to fellow Catholics under direct Vandal aegis from these areas.

Possidius' *Vita Augustini* is of interest in this connection. The situation within the Catholic Church which followed Augustine's death made the writing of such a work, natural enough in itself, all the more urgent. Possidius was one of the essential links between Augustine's generation and his posterity. As he writes himself, 'those who had gained most from him were those who had been able actually to see and hear him as he spoke in church and most of all those who had some contact with the quality of his life amongst men'.³⁰ Following generations could only know Augustine through his writings. Even, quite possibly, the author of the *De Promissionibus* in the 440's,³¹ and certainly Victor of Vita, writing in the 480's, knew him only as a writer.³² Indeed, in Possidius' time there may have been a fear that even this part of Augustine's legacy was under threat, as Possidius saw

so much of Augustine's life's work collapse before him. Possidius' *Indiculum*, a list of all Augustine's works (to which he had access in Augustine's library in Hippo, perhaps at the time of the Vandal siege), is appended to some manuscripts of the *Vita Augustini*.²³

Though the *Vita* is a hagiographical work, it devotes almost no space to deeds of a miraculous nature. Nor is the picture that Possidius gives us of Augustine that of the great thinker and theologian, as he was often perceived by future generations. To his biographer, once a monk in Augustine's clerical monastery, who knew him in daily life over a long period of time, Augustine was the energetic pastor and defender of the faith.²⁴ Though Possidius' view of Augustine may have been a little myopic through such proximity, and because of Possidius' preoccupations at the time of writing, the particular image that he left of Augustine as the African Catholic churchman who continued to be influential through his writings must have been very poignant to his own and immediately succeeding generations.

b) The reactions and responses of Catholic writers and preachers

It is necessary to bear in mind the limitations of our sources in understanding the predicament of the Catholic Church in the early Vandal period. Apart from solely anti-Arian works such as Cerealis' *Contra Maximinum* and the anonymous *De Trinitate* and the *Contra Varimadum*, the bulk of the surviving ecclesiastical writings which can be dated to this period consists of a series of sermons which have been attributed to

Bishop Quodvultdeus of Carthage (437?-453?).³⁵ There are certainly similarities in ideas and language between them, and some interesting points of contact with the *Liber de Promissionibus et Praedictionibus Dei* which is plausibly attributed to Quodvultdeus.³⁶ But scholars in the past have been too quick to attribute these sermons either to Quodvultdeus, or to Augustine, to whom they are ascribed in manuscripts. Indeed all exhibit strong Augustinian influence. However, it is more realistic to consider the sermons as having been produced in similar circumstances and conditions by several authors with a common *Weltanschauung*, perhaps under the influence of a central figure, who may possibly have been Quodvultdeus.³⁷ A few other Catholic sermons which seem to relate to early Vandal Africa will also be used to corroborate our knowledge.³⁸

As such, this body of sermons provides a useful basis for a demonstration of the mentality and rhetoric of Catholic ecclesiastical writers of the time. What is most important is that most of them can be demonstrated to have been written during or after the Vandal invasion.³⁹

As sermons they have a strong moral and spiritual tone, conveying little concrete information. They lay particular emphasis on defining the Catholic faith by attacking the opinions of heretics, pagans and Jews. A major preoccupation of these writings, as of all known Catholic writings of this period, is their attack on Arianism.

Augustine had left a very extensive and varied body of teaching and writing on nearly every conceivable topic of pastoral and doctrinal

interest, enough, as it were, to make the African Catholic Church self-sufficient in its own home-grown doctrine. Arianism had re-emerged as a serious problem only at the end of Augustine's life, and although Augustine managed to write three anti-Arian works before his death, the *Contra Maximinum* (the *Contra Sermonem Arrianorum* and the *Collatio cum Maximo*), these were clearly not sufficient for the urgent needs of church leaders in the subsequent period. Though African anti-Arian works of the subsequent period used Augustine's works, they also drew quite extensively from transmarine works such as Ambrosius' *De Fide*, and writings by Ambrosiaster and Jerome.⁴⁰ African Catholic writers soon built up an extensive armoury of biblical texts from which to argue their doctrinal position against, primarily, the Arians. Much of this must have been culled from wide and exhaustive reading of the books of the Bible and such patristic writings; it was essential to combat the extensive use of biblical statements employed by the Arians in support of their doctrine.⁴¹

The African reputation for an active defence of the faith which had been exhibited in Augustine's time against the Donatists and Pelagians and which perhaps came to its summation in Augustine's *De Haeresibus*, was continued, apparently with rigour and vehemence, against the Arians.⁴² African anti-Arian works of the Vandal period were much used by Spanish Catholic clerics in the later sixth century and after.⁴³ Such works as the *Solutiones* and the *Contra Varimadum*, both usually dated to the fifth century, show to what extent their writers were prepared to go in order to combat every detail of the arguments of the Arians.⁴⁴ Works such as these were clearly intended for the instruction

of clergy and the more learned amongst the laity.⁴⁵ They are easy to use handbooks which showed the reader how to defend specific points of doctrine and how to effectively combat questions which Arians were likely to ask them, whereas in contrast Augustine's works and those of other Latin authors were writings of a more general nature.

These Vandal period works might draw extensively from more general works. For instance, if we look at *Solutiones*, question 40, 'Against those who say the Son is lesser because he is sent by the Father', the answer is a pastiche of relevant passages from Ambrosius' *De Fide* and Augustine's *Contra Sermonem Arrianorum*.⁴⁶ An example from *Contra Varimadum* would seem to suggest that this work was intended to be supplementary to such existing patristic works. If we look at question 1.31, 'If they object that "the Father raised up his Son from the dead" (Phil 2:9)', the author suggested that the Catholic reader should respond using citations from the Old Testament (e.g. Jeremiah 38:25-6, Amos 9:6, Ps.3:6, Ps.138:18) and the New Testament (Acts 1:2-3, Rom. 6:9, Matth. 28:5-6) which were considered to demonstrate that Christ could raise himself and others from the dead through his divine power.⁴⁷ Augustine, by comparison, had devoted much time to showing that the Son also shared the divine substance of the Father and was not inferior on account of his begetting by the Father, but he did not devote time to answering the above question specifically.⁴⁸

Works such as Cerealis' *Contra Maximinum* and the *Altercatio cum Pascentio* deal with more specific questions. The anonymous *De Trinitate* is a quick reference work to scriptural citations in support of the

belief that there is one God, that the Father and Son are equal, that the Son was God, that the members of the Trinity are equal and that the Holy Spirit is God, concluding with a statement of faith.⁴⁹ The sermons gave a more condensed version of the teaching to suit the palates of their congregations.⁵⁰ Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe, writing in the early sixth century, shows us how African Catholic clerics might conceive of themselves and their forbears in the Vandal period, preoccupied as they were with the defence of their faith against the Arians - 'Those holy priests were filled with the true light, who, always meditating on the law day and night (cf. Ps.1:2), read testimonies from Scripture from here and there, and wrote books about faith and the holy Trinity, designating heresies of which they say that there are nearly one hundred, amongst which one is very much worse than the others'.⁵¹

African Catholics were too preoccupied to contribute towards helping defend Augustine's ideas about predestination against the Gallic 'semipelagians' or to involve themselves in the controversies surrounding the Councils of Ephesus or Chalcedon (unless the cosmopolitan Marius Mercator can be considered an African).⁵² However, from the later fifth century African theologians proved themselves capable of defending cherished African doctrines on the subjects of predestination and christology.⁵³ Vigilius of Thapsus in the late fifth century was to contribute in an informed way towards the defence of the formula of faith established at the Council of Chalcedon with the help of the *Tome* of Leo.⁵⁴ Fulgentius of Ruspe in the early sixth century involved himself in the Theopaschite controversy and also wrote a long

work against the 'semipelagian' Faustus of Riez.⁵⁵ In the meanwhile the old arguments were reiterated against pagans, Jews and Manichaeans.⁵⁶

The *De Promissionibus* is a work of great interest. It is divided into three sections, showing how events before and after the Mosaic law and then from the time of Christ foreshadowed Christ's life and his commission to the Church and how his word would be fulfilled. Another section deals with the half age (or *Dimidium Temporis*) of the time of the Coming of Antichrist, a period of conflict and diabolical persecution derived from Daniel 7:25 and Apocalypse 12:14, and the final one with the Glory of the Saints. The *De Promissionibus* appears to have been written between 445 and 451 by an exiled African cleric in Campania, very probably Quodvultdeus, bishop of Carthage.⁵⁷ The apocalyptic ideas in this work will be discussed later.

The sources most revealing about problems within the Church are those describing suffering, and those reproaching sinners who are held responsible for having brought it about. Also, some sources bewail the suffering of the faithful and the destruction of their places of worship in terms reminiscent of the Lamentations of Jeremiah where the city of Sion is afflicted by the impious king Nebuchadnezzar through divine wrath.⁵⁸ The differences are great enough, however, to give some historical credence to the accounts of invasion given by authors such as Possidius and the author of the *Sermo de Tempore Barbarico* 2.

Often related to these accounts of calamities are diatribes against the sins which their ecclesiastical authors considered brought

them about. The author of the *Sermo de Tempore Barbarico* 1, who was clearly writing from Carthage with the Vandal threat upon him, attacked the frequenting of circuses and theatres and related debauchery - 'while we did not wish to disturb the perverse peace of the city.... we disdained to keep the peace of good behaviour and the peace of our time perished'.⁶⁰ Other targets of his anger were the past greed of the rich⁶⁰ and the fear of the dangers of the present, which, it was felt, was the wrong priority - 'he who believes in the words of God fears more the eternal fire than the sword of some grim barbarian'.⁶¹ It was no doubt from sources such as these that Salvian drew for his diatribe against the moral depravity of Carthage in his *De Gubernatione Dei*.⁶²

We find in these writings also an element of self-blame by the clergy. The exiled author of the *De Promissionibus* reproaches himself and his fellow Catholics, lay and clerical, for their slowness in becoming penitent: 'we did not wish to be concerned by the great sins through whose perpetration we deserved to see these things... We believe ourselves to be cut off, exiled and expelled, but we do not grieve as we ought... The anger remains but we do not ask for forgiveness'.⁶³

The urgent call to penitence shows that there was, at least amongst some, a conscientious desire to maintain high pastoral standards despite the difficulties involved: 'we fear that many in this devastation were snatched from this life without the sacrament of baptism'.⁶⁴ According to Victor of Vita, following the confiscation of churches in Proconsularis, priests went off to try to hold mass wherever they could, obviously against the royal prohibition.⁶⁵

What we may have here is a highly vocal self-advertising minority within the Catholic Church, which no doubt exaggerated the threat to itself. Yet it would be difficult to deny the existence of the Vandal Arian threat. What is more, even if this group of writers was a minority, it is significant not only for the fact that we know about it but that they maintained such high ideals and may have exercised influence well beyond their own circle.

With their rapid loss of political backing and concomitant loss of social and economic influence, the leaders of the Catholic Church had to exploit to the full the powers that were left to them. As we saw in the last chapter, Gaiseric found that there were limits to his reduction of the Catholics. First the Catholic Church had on its side a well-developed doctrine which provided it with an identity and self-definition. Furthermore, it had rhetorical and literary skills with which to communicate its ideas and a tradition of preaching in Latin - the common language of Romano-Africans.

Gaiseric's fear of these advantages is well exhibited by his prohibition of funeral ceremonies, and by the fact that he claimed that he would thrust into exile any priest who mentioned any of the Old Testament 'tyrants' on the grounds that reference was being made to himself.⁶⁶ The degree of Gaiseric's fear may be reflected in the fact that in some cases it appears to have been unfounded, though in others the implications were well-disguised.⁶⁷ The degree to which rhetoric could influence Gaiseric is clear from the fact that he released a certain Vincomalos from prison because of his persuasiveness. This is

known to us from the poet Dracontius' *Satisfactio ad Gunthamundum*, which was itself a plea for release by king Gunthamund.⁶⁸

A noticeable tendency which may show that Gaiseric's hostility was taken seriously is the high incidence of anonymity in the case of works written in this period or their attribution to Augustine. All but the works of Cerealis, Victor of Vita and a few works of Vigilius of Thapsus have come down to us without author's names.⁶⁹ Even the *De Promissionibus*, written in exile, very probably in Campania, and the *Contra Varimadum* likewise remained, at least in their earliest surviving manuscripts, unattributed.⁷⁰ Though anonymity or attribution to another great writer was a recognised sign of humility, the prevalence of this feature in African writings of this period appears to be more than a coincidence.⁷¹

Though, in the circumstances in which they found themselves, silence might have been the most advisable strategy for Catholic clerics hoping to coexist with the Vandals, an important section of them opted to use one of the few means to power still available to them - rhetoric.⁷² They needed to show solidarity and a common front against a threatening enemy in order to defend their own interest and values. There had to be self-criticism; but defences also had to be built and morale boosted by whatever legitimate means. What we can safely use to demonstrate the teaching of these clergy is probably only the surviving literary tip of the iceberg of their communications and we cannot know how far our small corpus of works is representative. Nevertheless, it deserves scrutiny.

Of most interest are the conceptions of self-definition and - explicitly in opposition - the delineation of one's enemies. These writers both inherited and used a common Christian rhetoric but, at the same time, drew on the elements of the African and Catholic ecclesiastical tradition. The particular circumstances in which they found themselves led to a new combination of various traditional elements of self-definition with others adopted for the specific situation.⁷³

It is noticeable that in accordance with the moral and spiritual purpose of the sermons and other literature discussed above (with the exception of Victor of Vita's work, which calls itself a *historia*) the enemy are called *Arriani* rather than *Vandalii*. As we will see later in the case of Victor of Vita, however, the two are usually equated; the implication is also clear in this earlier literature, such as the following example addressed to Arians: 'You did not recall your sons from madness and bloodlust, you killed others, you divided the spoils of sinners without mercy, you delighted in earthly rather than heavenly things'.⁷⁴

The invaders were considered to be the instruments of God's anger. However, these writers always avoided even the implication that the invaders were a chosen people or were intrinsically good because of their divinely-appointed role, as Salvian argued.⁷⁵ Far from it, the Vandals were, according to these works, impious, cruel and proud ministers of the devil.⁷⁶ The apparent contradiction of their origin from God but use by the devil is explained by the reference to 1 John

2:19, 'They came from us but they were not of us. If they had come of us they would have remained with us'. The passage refers to the coming of Antichrist; after quoting it the author of the *De Promissionibus* goes on to say, 'this refers to heretics and particularly Arians who we now see seducing many with temporal power or the wiles of evil genius'."

Several of these works refer to the use of temporal power and money to seduce souls to Arianism, accompanied by mentions of rebaptism leading to their eternal perdition."

Occasionally there can be sensed a concern about the loss of patronage and control entailed by loss of temporal power. However, the writers knew the rhetorical methods by which to turn this to their own advantage: 'Come, he [the Arian] says, I shall defend you, if you are needy I shall clothe you, I will give you money. So then, heretic, do you not clothe the naked so that you should ruin the interior man clothed by Christ [through baptism]; feed the hungry so that you should take away heavenly food from the soul; give money, so that you sell Christ by rebaptising just as Judas sold Christ to the Jews to crucify?'.⁷⁹ The source of all power is summed up in a statement in the preface of the *Contra Varietatem*: 'The love of brotherhood and perfect faith can only be maintained by Catholics if they glorify in the power of God alone and not in the pride of unfaithful kings'.⁸⁰ Pride, of course, was, from the Augustinian point of view, the beginning of all sin.⁸¹

God, however, was the source of all temporal power; even if his instruments acted in a wayward and fallen fashion, such was the inscrutable divine will. Hence it was to God that requests for mercy should be addressed: 'Lord, since you who made me are all things, reply to them [heretics] for me so that I should not suffer such things. I feel your whip... remove your whip from me'.⁸²

We can sense in some texts the crisis of faith that the situation must have brought for many Catholics. For instance, the sermon *De Vite Vera* expresses a real fear of extermination; faith is strained but it is recognised as the only resort: 'So we are desolated. O moderate Father, do not wish to hand over the pruning hook to immoderate foreign people. They do not know how to think but to amputate. You yourself know how to purge well... So cut away so that you should save us at root not so that our memory should perish from the earth but so that there should be our true vestiges in the vine, and with bloody slaughter ceasing, a dry vine should flourish with the branches restored from captivity... since we think of all the holy people who were brought forward from this vine'.⁸³

Other authors, however, realised the danger to faith and the threat of a theodical crisis which the circumstances might bring about, while at the same time envisaging a more optimistic outcome.⁸⁴ The Church was showing tolerance for which it would be recompensed: 'I understand the true mother [Catholic Church] which still tolerates you choking her sons and injuring her husband [Christ]. She tolerates because she exhibits the patience of her husband, awaiting the winds of

freedom so that she should be vindicated by him through her humility since his charity will bring about her freedom'.⁸⁵

Some felt that if God was deserted by his instrument the invaders, this must affect adversely their temporal security, perhaps giving hope to those suffering under them: 'while you either flee or reject the struggles of consolation, you are neither strong in war nor faithful in peace'.⁸⁶ This was also a more temporal argument for conversion unusual at the time. Some argued for chronological limitations on the prosperity of their enemies: While time supports your error "you think you are something when you are nothing (Gal.6:3)";⁸⁷ 'the measure of time will be awaited so that all your pride will be humiliated'⁸⁸; 'Wait a little... you saw and will see those suffer who seize the things of others, for we will not always endure this whip by which we are beaten because the hand of the almighty holds it'.⁸⁹

There is also sometimes a tone of desperation and impatience in the plea: 'now, Lord, our David, strong of hand, so many of your flock daily perish... Why are you silent? Your enemies who hate you say that you are lesser, they humiliate your members by rebaptising. Why are you silent?... They said, "come, we will exterminate them from amongst the peoples" (Ps.82:4-5). They said that and did it and still you are silent. "I was silent indeed", he shouted, "but I will not always be silent" (Isaiah 42:14). Therefore Lord Jesus Christ, our David and King, take up your warlike vessel and advance to fight against him who slanders the army of the living God'.⁹⁰

Some passages exhibit an air of confidence in God's support, and even expectation of the conversion of the Vandals to Catholicism, just as pagan emperors had been converted to Christianity. The following is from *Adversus Quinque Haereses*: 'He said "I shall turn the backs of kings and I shall humble the glorious of the earth" (Isaiah 45:1-2). Do you not see the kings of the earth who before persecuted Christians now to be virtuous Christians? Do you not see those who demeaned the Church, humbly enter the Church? Do you not see the Church have as defenders the very people it had before as persecutors?'.²¹

Christian writers from the time of Constantine, Eusebius of Caesarea in particular, had viewed this age as one of triumph for the Church springing up from the blood of the martyrs. The support Nicaean Christianity enjoyed from a number of emperors of the fourth century, particularly Theodosius and his successors linked the fates of the Roman Empire and Nicaean Christianity closely.

The influx of barbarian peoples into the western Empire from 407 and the sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410 posed a problem for Christians when it came to explaining the divine mission of the Empire. In some writers such as Hesychius, bishop of Salonae, such disturbances were merely signs confirming the end of time which the 'world-wide' spread of Christianity, which had come about in the past century itself, presaged; according to Matt.24:14, 'this gospel will be preached to the ends of the earth and then the end will come'.²² Orosius adopted Eusebius' and Jerome's scheme of the ten persecutions from Nero to Diocletian and Maximin.²³ In wishing to show that the problems of the

present 'Christian times' were not as bad as those of the Roman past, Orosius envisaged the conversion of the barbarian invaders to Roman ways, did not expect persecution from them and, in his optimism, showed no apocalyptic expectations.⁹⁴ The above passage from *Adversus Quinque Haereses*, though specifically referring to pagan emperors, could be taken to imply hope in future conversion of persecuting kings, especially the Arian kings then persecuting. In this way it reflects Orosius' optimism.

Whether such optimism was a reflection of hope felt in the early stages of the Vandal settlement or one amongst several coexistent strains of thought in the early Vandal period cannot be confidently ascertained. By the time the anonymous *De Trinitate* was written there was clearly felt to be a challenge to the growth of the Catholic faith. This was expressed as follows: 'And so that no one should oppose what we have said - that the growth of the Church was promised through the Scriptures; and if they should vindicate this to have been ruined through this oppression, they should know that it is written in Jeremiah "the partridge shall cry out, it will gather together what it did not give birth to, it shall make its riches without justice" (Jeremiah 17:11). And this is a very true testament because the Catholic faith never grew without tribulations and persecutions, so that it should be fulfilled what is said: "because you must undergo much tribulation and anguish to see the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21). The exiles of innocent people, the proscriptions of unfortunate people and the torment and oppression of captives are a witness to this growth of faith'.⁹⁵

It was at this point that the author went on to attempt to explain why the persecution of the Donatists was not a hypocritical contradiction.⁹⁶ The simple fact was that the growth of faith could only be seen within the terms of the Catholic Church. The author of the *De Trinitate* assumed that the growth of faith would continue whether with the help of Roman imperial authority (coercing the Donatists into the Catholic fold) or in its absence, when under the rule of another, persecuting, power. This author, unlike Orosius, had to deal with the reality of the recurrence of persecution and yet he still maintains belief in the growth of the faith and does not interpret this in an apocalyptic way, but sees the positive effects of persecution.

As we have seen, Augustine after about 410 began to reject the idea that the age of persecutions had come to an end and that the Empire was an institution divinely-ordained to aid the propagation of Christianity, and accepted the possibility that the faith might grow without it.⁹⁷ Since the author of the *De Trinitate* still expected the further growth of the faith, supposedly partly because the Arians were not yet converted (one of the reasons behind his work), he clearly did not yet feel that the end was nigh and foresaw that further testing of Christians could be expected. The idea of the growth of the faith through testing can still be found in later works such as the *Historia* of Victor of Vita, which cites Exodus 1:12, 'as much as they were afflicted, so much more did they multiply and they grew very strong'.⁹⁸

For the author of the *De Promissionibus*, as for Hesychius of Salona, the prescribed time of persecutions and accompanying growth of

faith and the other events which were supposedly foreshadowed in the Scriptures, such as the destruction of idols and temples and the subjection of kings to Christ's law, were phases which had come to pass.⁹⁹ Even though the author of the *De Promissionibus* accepted with Augustine that there were more recent persecutions than the ten up to Diocletian, which Orosius had outlined, he did not consider any persecutions after 410.¹⁰⁰ While he accepted the present activities of the Vandal Arians against the Catholic faith as persecution, this was the persecution of the last times - the Arians were precursors of Antichrist and the Goths (or Vandals) and Moors would come to represent Gog and Magog whom Satan would deceive after being released from his thousand-year captivity (in accordance with Rev.20-1).¹⁰¹ Though the author of the *De Promissionibus* drew heavily upon Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, he defied his admonition not to calculate the time of Christ's returning (in line with Acts 1:7).¹⁰²

According to the scheme of the *De Promissionibus*, the present fell well into the final 'half age' during which Antichrist would appear and at the end of which Christ and the saints would enjoy an eternal rule.¹⁰³ However, although the author was convinced that the end of time was approaching, he resisted the temptation of pinning that end down to the immediate future probably fearing the dangers to the faith and the institutional Church that such apocalyptic millenarianism might bring about.¹⁰⁴ The, probably African, author of the *Consultationes Zacchaei et Apollonii* writing around 412 had considered in the face of recent calamities that the final three-and-a-half years of the world would soon be upon him.¹⁰⁵ The Donatist recension of the *Liber Genealogus* of 438

considered that Gaiseric was Antichrist.¹⁰⁶ The, possibly Catholic, recension of 463 calculated that there were only sixteen years until the six thousandth since the creation, that is, the end of the world, according to the Hippolytan chronology.¹⁰⁷ The *De Promissionibus* at one point implies that the devil would be released from his thousand-year captivity sixty years hence and avoids the possibility of such rapid obsolescence as the aforementioned works must have experienced¹⁰⁸ (he also considered that seven kings might rule before Antichrist came, though these could have ruled simultaneously).¹⁰⁹ However, the author of the *De Promissionibus* sought to emphasise the imminence of the coming of Antichrist rather than to put a definite date upon it. The 'making to cease of the daily sacrifice' which the author expected in accordance with Daniel 11:31 must have seemed a present reality to Catholics in Proconsularis where a royal prohibition ran against the celebration of Catholic mass around the time of writing.¹¹⁰

There may have been some initial optimism about the outcome of the Vandal invasion for Catholics, and the wary entente from c.442 to 455 may have boosted this optimism at times. However, the failure of this alliance to prevent the harassment and exile of clergy in Proconsularis and elsewhere and the future prospects for the Catholics in Africa were clearly grounds for pessimism and an apocalyptic mood for a leading African cleric exiled abroad. As we have seen, this pessimism was to be found in other works written at the time. Exiled in Italy and using secular authors, especially Virgil and the Sibylline Oracles, though within a Christian framework of history, as Augustine had done in *De Civitate Dei*, the author of the *De Promissionibus* may partly have

been aiming the work at the educated and influential throughout the Empire as Augustine had done.¹¹¹ Amongst his intended audience was, no doubt, the Emperor Valentinian III, whom he describes as *pius et christianus*.¹¹² One could understand that the author might wish to convey to the powers that be in the Empire that despite the diplomatic alliance between the Empire and Gaiseric, the Vandal Arians were wreaking havoc against the African Catholics and were the very precursors of Antichrist. Such uncompromising literature may have been designed to help persuade Valentinian to intervene diplomatically with Gaiseric. Indeed such intervention led to the election of a new bishop of Carthage which took place in 454, only a few years after the work must have been written.

So rapid a switch, then, from persecuting Church to persecuted Church meant that triumphal images were no longer apposite and that the image of the humble, suffering Church was the one to be preferred. The image of the Lamb was common and could be used to suggest divine protection against secular power: 'all heretical Arians are meant where it says "these will fight against the Lamb and the Lamb will defeat them" (Rev.17:14). For they fight by blowing upon and rebaptising the members of the Lamb whom Christ had by now consecrated by his blood'.¹¹³

The theme of David and Goliath was also common: 'Mad heretic... dispute about him who made you and me. See that he did not know highfaluting things, but sought to know God in simplicity of heart; that humble David who cast down the proud forehead of Goliath with a single stone';¹¹⁴ 'we do not fear massed enemies of warlike appearance... David

alone a small weak boy prostrated the great and terrible Goliath... with a single blow... What does this stone signify... but Christ against the devil...';¹¹⁵ 'Proud Arian..., you say that the Son of the living God is lesser [than the Father].... You are just like Goliath; for he, seeing David coming, considered him as nothing.... That gentle, lesser person will overcome you not in helmet and breastplate but "because God chose the weak of the world so that he should confound the strong" (1 Cor.1:25); nor will you perish by the shield and spear but by the rod and the stone because "what is weak of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor.1:25)'.¹¹⁶ The suffering Church would not lie down but transformed itself into an *ecclesia militans* with the help of God: 'one true and Catholic Church fighting against all heresies can fight and cannot be overcome'.¹¹⁷ Military imagery was often used, such as that in Eph.6:14-7,¹¹⁸ together with more unusual images such as those from Ps.19:8-9.¹¹⁹

Legal imagery was often used in defending the case of the Catholic Church - 'But should laws be silent amongst arms? Not at all. This [the testament of Christ] should be striven for and served by the laws'.¹²⁰ The great catenae of biblical statements in support of the Catholic case and against that of the Arians were the legal armoury of the Catholic clergy. They would defend their case *testimonialiter* so that they should be able to rebut them with legal documents.¹²¹ The messages in their sermons and works were intended not only for the edification of Catholic clergy and people but were also meant to be read and heard by Arians, who would be driven onto the defensive: 'the heretical litigators of error should hear. Also faithful Catholic workers of God should hear and hear well. These should hear so that they

are instructed; those so that they should be corrected; or these should hear so that they should not be seduced; those so that they should be punished'.¹²²

There was also expressed at times a desire to share the inheritance of Christ (in terms of his commission to the Church), but this did not entail a compromise on the part of the Catholics. Conversion of the Arians was necessary before this inheritance could be shared, for the supposition that Christ was inferior to God the Father meant that the unity of God was broken: 'Tell me, if you are with me in all things, why do we litigate? If we possess a single inheritance together, we are brothers.... If it is "good and joyful for brothers to live as one" (Ps.132:1), why is there new fabric before the wall? At the same time we are vigilant in guarding our inheritance... We have envious enemies and they wish to possess it not with us but against us. No one should usurp anything to himself. This inheritance was so given to us that it should be possessed undivided and not dispersed into parts. We should collect the fruits of it together so that we should not lose them by division. Poverty makes me concerned'.¹²³ The harvest of souls was limited for Catholic leaders, since it was usurped in great part by intruders, leaving them in pastoral poverty. The intruder in question was 'the Arian, who I wish to be a Catholic Christian'.¹²⁴ However, the difference of the Arian from the Catholic inevitably made him an *alienus*: 'I seek the love of brothers not that of foreign sons whose mouth speaks vanity... because foreign sons always lied to me and endured, and closed me from their ways (Ps.17:46). They say to me daily "where is your God" (Ps.41:4).'¹²⁵

In necessarily defining themselves over against their new arch-enemy, the Arians, Catholic leaders used and adapted the ecclesiological self-definitions which had been used already in the struggle against the Donatists, especially that of the idea of the *unitas* of the one true Catholic Church. However, in the conflict with the Arians, the focus of the attack on the unity of the Church shifted to the *unitas trinitatis* or *divinitatis*.¹²⁶ Closely allied to the concept of the *unitas ecclesiae* was that of its 'catholicity'.

This idea was reapplied against the Arians: 'All heretics are found to be alien from the fellowship of the apostles, who, leaving the peace of their bread and communion, should preach the word of the apostles not in their churches but in the streets and do not communicate with the *memoriae* of the apostles, separated from the whole, they appropriate to themselves the Catholic name';¹²⁷ 'you will have known there to be within the *Catholica* such true faith, brotherly love and perpetual salvation. For it is not in a corner but is all things everywhere. If anyone departs from this end and hands himself over to the error of heretics he will be judged as a fugitive slave not as an adoptive son';¹²⁸ 'the whole world is all people; the Church possess all, accepting it from her husband in marriage. Any congregation of any heresy sitting in a corner is a concubine, not a mother'.¹²⁹

Catholic writers also revived against the Arians the arguments against rebaptism which they had used against the Donatists. The vehemence and frequency with which these arguments were applied would seem to demonstrate the degree of the threat which this means of

poaching members from Catholic to Arian congregations posed. The argument based on Eph.4:5, 'one God, one faith, one baptism', was reused, 'or perhaps you brought over by boat with you a new faith, a new baptism and new god from overseas?'.¹²⁰ Indeed, this verse appears to have become a slogan of profession and protestation.¹²¹ John 13:10 was also employed, 'who once is washed does not need to be washed again'.¹²² A rigorous stance continued to be taken on the effect of rebaptism on salvation: 'All rebaptised by heretics either who have voluntarily lost the clothes of Christ or who, failing in persecution, have lost what they had, should run while there is time, spoiled and naked, in penitence to the pious Father... so that when they will be judged they will not be exhibited naked',¹²³ 'you blow away Christ, you rebaptise the Catholic, and what is the worst of you art, then you oppress some with power so that you should lose them, others you buy with money whom you kill',¹²⁴ 'you do not construct your temple to God from living stones, these you strangle, dishonour,... damn by rebaptising'.¹²⁵ Various new arguments against rebaptising were also constructed, comparing it with the watering down of the salt of the earth or the burning of already cooked bread.¹²⁶

The Catholic writers of this period, then, demonstrated an inventiveness and adaptability when faced with the new challenge to their faith and interests by supplying the conceptual and rhetorical means to bolster the faith of their followers and oppose that of their opponents, who controlled or had access to more tangible means of persuasion. The texts cited help to show the full and varied use of rhetorical devices and the often stark and aggressive use of metaphor.

Just as there were some bishops who fled from the Vandal threat, there were also those who stayed behind and attempted to execute their pastoral duties conscientiously. One of the most important pastoral duties was the preaching of the Word. In doing this the preachers conveyed varied responses to the presence and behaviour of Vandal Arians in Africa, no doubt reflecting the different possible reactions of their audience and also their own feelings.

There is also a predominantly militant tone in these writings aimed at bolstering the faith and countering any negative reactions which might weaken it. Rhetoric was one of the few means to power still left open to Catholic writers even though there was often an understandable desire that their writing remain anonymous. Such writers were very concerned to assert their identity against those challenging it and especially, of course, the Arians who now surpassed all the other heresies as the arch-enemy. These Catholic writers used arguments once used against the Donatists in order to oppose Arian rebaptism and to assert the catholicity and unity of their own Church. There was a great concern about the Arians' ability to win over the Catholics and about the theodical challenge that Arian success had created, and these writers adopted different ways to try to combat such challenges.

The Vandal Arians may have been the instruments of God's anger but in the eyes of these writers they were not a chosen people. In fact they were often considered to symbolise Antichrist or his heralds. Some writers expressed apocalyptic expectations and several pessimism, desperation and impatience with God. However, there was a universal

recognition that God was the source of all temporal power, and other writers exhibit optimism, and even the hope of the conversion of the Vandals and a continued growth of the faith. The contradictory attitudes are a symbol of the confusion of the times for Catholics. These writings are a vivid reflection both of the degree of concern of their authors and of the threat that lay upon them.

CHAPTER 3 NOTES

- 1) See above 42.
- 2) See above 42-3.
- 3) Ep.228.7, CSEL 57 490.
- 4) Ep.228.8-14, CSEL 57 490-6.
- 5) E.g. Cyprianus, Theodoret of Cyrrhus *Epp.* 52 and 53, SC 98 128-30; Rufinianus, VF 9.1 (55); Possessor, *Collectio Avellana Epp.* 131, 230-1, CSEL 35 552, 695-6; Quintianus, Victor 1.29 (8); for the African bishops at the Council of Chalcedon, who were probably refugees see V. Laurent 'Les évêques d'Afrique au concile de Chalcédoine (451)' *Bulletin de la section historique de l'Académie roumaine* 25 (1944) 152-173; for African bishops at the Roman councils of 465 and 487 see Maier 72-3.
- 6) *Notitia* (71).
- 7) *Collectio Avellana Ep.* 85, CSEL 35 330.
- 8) Victor 3.52 (53).
- 9) See e.g., O. Nicholson 'Flight from persecution as imitation of Christ: Lactantius' *Divine Institutes* IV. 18. 1-2' *JTS n.s.* 40 (1989) 48-65; Cyprian *De Lapsis* 10-11 CCL 3 ed. R. Weber (Turnhout, 1972) 226-7; Ep.58, CSEL 3.2 656-666.
- 10) CCL 149 288, c.20.
- 11) *Vita Augustini* 30.2 (212).
- 12) It is clear from Possidius' mention of the Vandal capture of Hippo fourteen months after Augustine's death (August 430) *Vita Augustini* 28.12 (208), that the *Vita Augustini* must have been written in 432 or after. Since Possidius had been bishop since 403 at least, he is unlikely to have lived far beyond the 440's. In any case, Ep.228 was

most relevant to the circumstances of invasion which were taking place in the 430's. Possidius mentions Carthage as not having been taken, so that the work most probably dates to before 439, *Vita Augustini* 28.10 (208).

13) *Vita Augustini* 28.10-13 (208-10).

14) See J.J.Gavigan *De Vita Monastica in Africa Septentrionali* (Turin, 1961) 105-6, 137, and Clover *Gaiseric the Statesman* 54.

15) *CIL* 8 8634.

16) *Vita Augustini* 30.26-7 (222-4) = *Ep* 228.7, CSEL 57 490. For Christian stoicism before the spectacle of ruins as a common attitude see Courcelle *Histoire littéraire* 277-282.

17) E.g. Possidius *Vita Augustini* 28.4-10 (204-8); *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.1.1-2, CCSL 60 473; Ps.-Victor of Vita *Sermo de Cypriano Martyre*, PL 58 265B.

18) *Vita Augustini* 28.6 (206).

19) Possidius sought protection with part of his congregation within the walls of Hippo, see n.12. See also *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 6.3-5, CCSL 60 279-80.

20) See above 76-7.

21) See above 75. For enslavement, Victor 1.14 (4-5).

22) Cf. Augustine *Ep.* 228.11, CSEL 57 493.

23) For the split during the Decian persecution see e.g. Cyprian *Ep.* 15-7, CSEL 3.2 513-23. For the aftermath of the Diocletianic persecution see above 27-31.

24) See above 62.

25) See above 63-5.

26) Lancel *Actes* 1 166-7.

27) See above 386-90.

28) Victor, bishop of Cartenna in Mauretania wrote one book against the Arians offered to Gaiseric, a book on penitence, a work of consolation addressed to a certain Basilius on the death of his son and many homilies, Gennadius *De Viribus Illustribus* 78, 102. Voconius, bishop of Castellum in Mauretania wrote against the Jews, Arians and other heretics and a book on the sacraments, Gennadius 79, 103. Cerealis, bishop of Castellum, author of the *Contra Maximinum* was described as *natione Afer* by pseudo-Gennadius 96, 110-1 suggests he was not Mauretanian, since Gennadius and his continuator refer to other Mauretanians as *Mauri*. The fact that Cerealis came across an area of Vandal destruction on his way to Carthage suggests he may have come from one of the Castellum bishoprics in Byzacena or southern Numidia. See ch.2 n.115.

29) See P.A.Février 'Martyrs, polémique et politique en Afrique, IV-V siècles' *Revue d'histoire et de civilisation du Maghreb* 1 (1966) 8-18. For the closer relation with the Roman rather than the African Church of the Mauretanian church see Lancel *Actes* 1 146-154; for the general tendency of the province towards autonomy see P.A.Février 'Aux origines du christianisme en Maurétanie césarienne' *MEFRA* 98 (1986) 798-804; for the inclination of the Mauretanian Church away from the Roman one and towards the African see Lepelley 'Léon le Grand et l'église maurétanienne' 189-204.

30) *Vita Augustini* 31.9 (238-40).

31) For the dating of the work to 445-451 see Quodvultdeus *Livre des promesses et prédications de Dieu* SC 101 ed.R.Braun (Paris,1967) 17-18 and P.Schepens 'Un traité à restituer à Quodvultdeus, évêque de Carthage

au Ve siècle' *RSR* 10 (1919) 233-4. The only references to Augustine in the *De Promissionibus* are to his writings, 2.25.54, CCSL 60 123, 2.36.82, CCSL 60 147, 3.34.36, CCSL 60 179. Though bishop Quodvultdeus of Carthage has often been identified with the deacon Quodvultdeus of Carthage who corresponded with Augustine in *Epp.* 221-4, CSEL 57 442-454, the identification has mainly been a supposition through identity of names. For the frequency of the name see Mandouze 945-55 who records twenty-five examples. In support of the identification see e.g. Braun in *SC* 101 89; G.Morin 'Pour une future édition des opuscles de s.Quodvultdeus, évêque de Carthage au Ve siècle' *RB* 31 (1914) 156-162. Against the identification, M.Simonetti 'Studi sulla letteratura cristiana d'Africa in età vandalica' *RIL* 83 (1950) 422-4; A.Kappelmacher 'Echte und unechte Predigten Augustins' *VS* 49 (1931) 96-99.

32) Victor 1.10-11 (4) referring to Augustine's writings and eloquence.

33) See A.Wilmart 'Operum S.Augustini elenchus a Possidio eiusdem discipulo Calamensi episcopo digestus' in *Miscellanea Agostiniana* 2 (Rome, 1931) 149-233 esp. 159-60. The *Indiculum* notably reflects the preoccupations of the *Vita Augustini* in Possidius' emphasis on dividing his list according to the heresies against which most of Augustine's works were directed.

34) See *Vita Augustini* ed.H.Veiskotten (Princeton, 1919) 20. See e.g. *Vita Augustini* 17-18 (170-8) for one of his many disputations with heretical opponents.

35) These can be found edited in CCSL 60. See Morin 'Opuscles de Quodvultdeus' 156-162; *Franses Werke des Quodvultdeus*; Braun in CCSL 60 v-vii.

36) See *Franses Werke des Quodvultdeus* 36-79 and Schepens 'Traité à restituer à Quodvultdeus' 230-43.

37) For a similar opinion see Isola 10 n.6 (Isola's work was published after most of this thesis was completed but reference will be made to his ideas in notes where necessary). Against the attribution of these sermons to Quodvultdeus see M.Simonetti 'Qualche riflessioni su Quodvultdeus di Cartagine' *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 14 (1978) 201-7 and 'Letteratura cristiana in età vandalica' 412-424.

38) For the most up-to-date list of sermons which have been ascribed to this period see Isola 9-19. Note also, despite the number identified how little Isola has been able to use these other sermons as a historical source, apart from those ascribed to Quodvultdeus and Fulgentius, Isola 177.

39) This is clear in the case of the *De Tempore Barbarico* sermons; see *Franses Werke des Quodvultdeus* 11-20. In others, references to violence, rebaptism by Arians, the great prominence that Arianism is given and the vehemence with which it is opposed are fair demonstrations of the Arian threat. These are: *Contra Judaeos* (*Franses Werke des Quodvultdeus* 29-30), *Adversus Quinque Haereses* (*Franses* 30-2), *De Ultima Quarta Feria* (*Franses* 22-3), *De Cataclysmo* (*Franses* 32-3), *De Accedentibus in Gratiam* 1 and 2 (*Franses* 23-6), *De Symbolo* 2-4 (*Franses* 26-8). In addition I would admit *De Symbolo* 1; cf. *De Symbolo* 1.13.6, CCSL 60 334.

40) See Simonetti 'Letteratura cristiana d'Africa in età vandalica' 407-12 and B.Fischer 'Der Bibeltext in den pseudo-augustinischen *Solutiones diversarum quaestionum ab haereticis obiectarum*' *Biblica* 23 (1942) 139-164.

- 41) See e.g. the wealth of biblical *testimonia* in the *Contra Varimadum*, which does not draw extensively from patristic sources; *Biblica Florilegia Africana* CCSL 90 ed. B.Schwank (Turnhout, 1976) 1-134.
- 42) Augustine completed only the first book of his *De Haeresibus*, PL 42 21-50. The second book was to be on 'What makes a heretic'. The first book of the *De Haeresibus* of Primasius, bishop of Hadrumetum, was on this subject, followed by two books on 'That which reveals a heretic'. Unfortunately, Primasius' book is only known to us from Isidore of Seville's *De Viris Illustribus* 22, PL 83 1095A.
- 43) One MS of the *Contra Varimadum* was corrected in Spain in the sixth or seventh century, CCSL 90 ed. B.Schwank vii; MSS such as Berlin 78, once Phillipps 1671, of the ninth century, show that African anti-Arian works were transmitted via Spain: K.Künstle *Traktat zur Bekämpfung des Priscillianismus und westgotischen Arianismus aus der VI Jahrhundert* (Mainz, 1900). African anti-Arian works were also read in Gaul in the fifth and sixth centuries, as the knowledge of a number of such texts by Gennadius of Marseilles and his continuator shows; see n.28. The *Breviarium adversus Haereticos* ascribed by G.Morin to Caesarius of Arles or his atelier also used the *Contra Varimadum* and possibly the *Liber Fidei Catholicae*, Victor 2.56-100 (26-39) and Fulgentius *De Trinitate ad Felicem*, CCSL 91A 634-46, 'Le *Breviarium Fidei* contre les Ariens: produit de l'atelier de Césaire d'Arles?' *RHE* 35 (1939) 35-53, esp. 45, 49-50.
- 44) Both works are edited in CCSL 90 ed. B.Schwank 1-134 and 141-223. For the dating of these works see Fischer 'Der Bibeltext in den *Solutiones*' 153-7, who considers both the *Solutiones* and *Contra Varimadum* to date to 470-90. Schwank considers the *Contra Varimadum* to

date to 445-50 when we know other African Catholic clerics were writing from exile from Naples; see CCSL 90 vii-viii.

45) See J. McClure 'Handbooks against heresy in the West, from the late fourth to the late sixth centuries' *JTS* n.s.30 (1979) 186-97 espec. 196-7. Note e.g. the reference to the lector of the work in *Contra Varimadum* and *Cerealis Contra Maximum* 20, PL 58 766B. Pious laymen like Monimus later in Carthage, might also read these works, Fulgentius *Ad Monimum* Prologue, CCSL 91 ed. J. Fraipont (Turnhout, 1968) 2.

46) CCSL 90 184-5.

47) CCSL 90 42-3.

48) E.g. *Contra Maximum* 1.15, 1.19, PL 42 754, 756; *Contra Sermonem Arrianorum* 4, 19, 21, PL 42 686, 697, 698; *Collatio cum Maximino* 14, PL 42 723.

49) CCSL 90 243-59.

50) For references to the lay congregation see *De Tempore Barbarico* 1.1.17-8, CCSL 60 424 and Fulgentius *Sermo de Dispensatoribus Domini*, CCSL 91A 889-96.

51) *Psalmus Abecedarius contra Arianos* 31-36, CCSL 91A 877-8.

52) Marius Mercator was the translator of Greek writings concerned with the Pelagian controversy, the Nestorian controversy and the Council of Ephesus, all written 429-431, see E. Schwartz *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* 1.5.1 (Berlin, 1924-5) 3-70. He is often considered to be an African because of his friendship with Augustine (Ep. 193, CSEL 57 167-75) but this is not conclusive; cf. B. Altaner *Patrologie: Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter* 5th ed. (Freiburg, 1958) 413-4.

53) See M. Simonetti 'Letteratura antimonofisita d'Occidente' *Augustinianum* 18 (1978) 487-532, esp. 532.

- 54) For Vigilinus of Thapsus see G.Ficker *Studien zu Vigilinus von Thapsus* (Leipzig, 1897) and PL 62 95-238. Vigilinus wrote several anti-Arian works but also found time to write a work *Contra Eutychetem* PL 62 95-154. See Simonetti 'Letteratura antimonofisita' 505-22.
- 55) For Fulgentius and the Theopaschite controversy see ch.7 n.17. The *Contra Faustum* is now lost, see VF 25.6-7 (119-21).
- 56) Cf.e.g. *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 1-4, CCSL 60 261-70.
- 57) See Braun in SC 101, 88-113.
- 58) See e.g. the comparison between Lamentations 1 and *De Promissionibus* 2.33.72, CCSL 60 138 and Victor 3.66-8 (56).
- 59) 4.14, CCSL 60 429-30. See Isola 84-6.
- 60) *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.6.11, CCSL 60 478.
- 61) 4.17, CCSL 60 430.
- 62) See Courcelle *Histoire littéraire* 154-5; cf. Salvian *De Gubernatione Dei* 6.12.69-70, SC 220 406 and *De Tempore Barbarico* 1.1.11, CCSL 60 424, 1.4.11-3, CCSL 60 429.
- 63) *De Promissionibus* 2.33.72, CCSL 60 138.
- 64) *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.6.2, CCSL 60 478.
- 65) Victor 1.18 (5).
- 66) Victor 1.16 (5) and 1.22 (6).
- 67) E.g. references to Herod were often made in anti-Jewish contexts: *Contra Iudaeos* 10.4-5, CCSL 60 239. Likewise to Nabuchadnezzar in *Contra Iudaeos* 15.5, CCSL 60 247 and *De Promissionibus* 2.24.74, CCSL 60 140; however, the accounts in *De Promissionibus* 2.23.72, CCSL 60 138 and 2.24.76 (142) could be construed as veiled references to tyranny ('proud kings who daringly seize the vessels of the house of God...., handling them without any reverence to God in whose name they are consecrated,

should see that they are insulting Him'). In the only reference to Holofernes (*De Promissionibus* 2.38.87-8, CCSL 60 151), the author states that Judith's tyrannicide prefigures the Church's crushing of its enemies and the devil. The several references to Pharoah in the *De Promissionibus* e.g. 1.34.28-9, CCSL 60 55 do not lend themselves to interpretations which refer to contemporary circumstances. The references to the Arians as Antichrist in *Dimidium Temporis* (see n.101) do not need any veiling, though the Vandals are never explicitly mentioned, so the mention of Pharoah in *Dimidium Temporis* 13 (CCSL 60 207) cannot easily be construed as referring to Gaiseric. However, the references were probably often well-disguised. The reference to Pharoah in *De Cataclysmo* 3.12-5.4, CCSL 60 411-415 could only be taken with a great deal of imagination to refer to Gaiseric until an explicit reference was made in 5.4, 'What else were the Magi of the Pharoah signifying unless all heretical ministers of the devil who, under the name of Christ desire to devour the people of Christ'. For other sermons mentioning Pharoah, see Isola 16-8. For references to Goliath see nn.96-8.

68) *Dracontius Satisfactio* MGH a.a.14 130. Dracontius seems to have regained his freedom by Thrasamund's reign (496-523) though whether it was as an outcome of his *Satisfactio* is unknown. See Romano *Studi Draconziani* 73-8.

69) See below 176-9.

70) For the original anonymity of the *Liber de Promissionibus*, see Braun in SC 101 11, 19 and Franes *Verke des Quodvultdeus* 47. The work was gradually ascribed to Prosper of Aquitaine from the sixth century onwards. For the original anonymity of the *Contra Varimadum* see CCSL 90

ed. Schwank viii. For a case for its ascription to Augustine see G.Morin 'Une compilation antiarienne inédite sous le nom de s.Augustin issue du milieu de Cassiodore' *RBen* 31 (1914-9) 238: in the MS Paris B.N.12217 (of Corbie, ninth to tenth century) it is clear that a second hand has added Augustine's name.

71) See above 178-9.

72) Sidonius Apollinaris turned down requests from Leo of Narbonne to write a history of his time, stating that reading was easier for men of their time and circumstances and that 'while it is shameful to utter falsehoods, it is dangerous to tell the truth'; *Ep.*4.22.5, MGH a.a.8 73. When Sidonius in similarly difficult circumstances was asked by count Arbogastes to compose a work of biblical exegesis he stated that 'he wished to lie hidden' *Ep.*4.17.1, 3, MGH a.a.8 68.

73) See Isola 123-30.

74) *De Accedentibus ad Gratiam* 2.13.11, CCSL 60 470. See above 184-5.

75) Salvian *De Gubernatione Dei* 7.11.49-13.56, SC 220 464-70; but see D.J.Cleland 'Salvian and the Vandals' *Studia Patristica* 10. Papers presented to the International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 1967 (Berlin, 1970) 270-4 who shows that Salvian's concern was with the Romans and that he had little interest in the Vandals.

76) *Impius*, e.g. *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.6.8, CCSL 60 478; *saevus*, *De Promissionibus. Dimidium Temporis* 13.22, CCSL 60 207; *superbus*, *De Accedentibus ad Gratiam* 2.13.9, CCSL 60 470.

77) *De Promissionibus. Dimidium Temporis* 5.7, CCSL 60 194.

78) E.g. *Contra Iudaeos* 7.5, CCSL 60 236; *De Symbolo* 1.13.6, CCSL 60 334.

- 79) *De Symbolo* 1.13.4, CCSL 60 334. See Isola 'Temi di impegno civile' esp.285-7.
- 80) CCSL 90 9.
- 81) E.g. *De Civitate Dei* 12.6, CCSL 47 359.
- 82) *De Accedentibus ad Gratiam* 1.9.4, CCSL 60 448. For a similar use of Psalm 38.11, see Victor 3.65 (57).
- 83) See PL 65 912 A-D and Courcelle *Histoire littéraire* 188-9. Also now Isola 46. See Victor 2.38 (21): Huneric 'thought of black things against the Church of God, so that having cut other members he should destroy the whole body through butchery'.
- 84) For a brief insight into the problems of theodicy and social change, though from a different point of view, see J.L.Nelson 'Society, theodicy and the origins of Medieval heresy: towards a reassessment of the medieval evidence' in D.Baker (ed.) *Studies in Church History* 9 (Cambridge, 1972) 66.
- 85) *Contra Iudaeos* 22.14, CCSL 60 258. Victor 2.54 (25) tells us that bishop Eugenius of Carthage addressed the Arian clergy at the Conference of Carthage in 484 'God shall see the violence which we suffer, he shall know the affliction which we sustain from persecutors'.
- 86) *De Accedentibus ad Gratiam* 2.13.8, CCSL 60 470.
- 87) *Contra Iudaeos* 7.5, CCSL 60 236.
- 88) *De Accedentibus ad Gratiam* 2.13.9, CCSL 60 470.
- 89) *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.8.2-3, CCSL 60 480.
- 90) *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.14.3-6, CCSL 60 486.
- 91) *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 7.11, CCSL 60 294.
- 92) Augustine Ep.198.5-6, CSEL 57 240-1.
- 93) *Historiae adversus Paganos* 7.26-7, CSEL 5 493-500.

94) *Historiae adversus Paganos* 7.41, 3, CSEL 5 554, 559-64. Orosius accepts the dating system of the chronicles of Eusebius and Jerome which dated Orosius time of writing (AD 417) to 5724 years since the creation while many contemporary writers adopted and adapted the Hippolytan chronology which allowed them to date the end of the world (six thousand years from the creation) to dates in the fifth century AD. It was conventionally considered by Christians of this age that the present fell in the sixth millenium since the creation at the end of which the Antichrist would appear to be supplanted soon after by the second coming of Christ. For the datng systems adopted see R.Landes 'Lest the Millenium be fulfilled: apocalyptic expectations and the pattern of Western chronography, 100-800 CE' in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages* (Leuven, 1988) 137-62, 209-11.

95) *De Trinitate* 4, CCSL 90 242.

96) See above 45-6.

97) Augustine *Ep.* 199.12.47, CSEL 57 285 and *De Civitate Dei* 18.52, CCSL 48 650-2; Markus *Saeculum* 30-64.

98) Victor 1.23 (7).

99) *De Promissionibus* 3.34.35 - 39.46, CCSL 60 178-88. On the growth of faith; *De Promissionibus* 3.34.36, CCSL 60 179: ...*augmenta ecclesiae quae nos videmus impleri.*

100) *De Promissionibus* 3.34.36, CCSL 60 179; Augustine *De Civitate Dei* 18.52, CCSL 48 650-2. See H. Inglebert 'Un exemple historiographique au Ve siècle: la conception de l'histoire chez Quodvultdeus de Carthage et ses relations avec la Cité de Dieu' *REA* 37 (1991) 312-3. The most recent example of a persecution which the author cites falls in the time of Emperor Arcadius (395-408).

101) *Dimidium Temporis* 10.18, CCSL 60 203. Here, in reference to the desecration of the Temple and the 'making to cease of the daily sacrifice' (Dan.11:31), it is stated, ...et hic Arrianos signat praecursores Antichristi. For Gog and Magog see *Dimidium Temporis* 13.22, CCSL 60 207, where the author, drawing from Rev. 20:1-7 refers to the three-and-a-half years after the release of the devil during which the City of God would be trampled 'by heretics and, especially, Arians who will then have much power: Gog and Magog, as certain people say, Goths and Moors,... through whose savagery the devil now devastates the Church and then he will persecute it more making to cease the 'daily sacrifice''. For Vandals falling under the title of Goths, see *Liber Genealogus* 616, MGH a.a.9 195.

102) *De Civitate Dei* 18.53, CCSL 48 652-3; 20.11, CCSL 48 708-12.

103) *Dimidium Temporis* CCSL 60 190-215, esp. 1.2-6.12, CCSL 60 190-8; *Gloria Sanctorum*, CCSL 60 216-23. 190.

104) For apocalyptic millenarianism, see Landes 'Apocalyptic expectations' 207 and for, possibly similar, examples of clerics dating the second coming so as to delay any immediate reaction to adverse circumstances, 159.

105) For a critical edition see *Consultationes Zacchaei et Apollonii* ed. G.Morin, *Florilegium Patristicum* 39 (Bonn, 1935) who attributes it to Firmicus Maternus. For dating and authorship see Courcelle *Histoire littéraire* 261-75. It is notable that borrowings from this work are detectable in the *Liber Fidei Catholicae*, an anti-Arian work of c.484, attributed to Eugenius, bishop of Carthage (Ps.-Gennadius *De Viris Illustribus* 97, 111) and included in Victor's *Historia*, 2.56-101 (26-

39); see Courcelle *Histoire littéraire* 261 n.3; *Consultationes* 2.3 (51-3), Victor 2.77-8 (32).

106) *Liber Genealogus* 618, MGH a.a.9 196.

107) For the *Liber Genealogus*, see Monceaux *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne* 6 249-58. The Lucensis recension of the *Liber Genealogus* mentions dating to the sixteenth and the twenty-fourth years of Gaiseric's reign (= AD 454/5 and 462/3), 428 and 499, MGH a.a.9 181, 89. For the use of Hippolytan chronology in the Lucensis; MGH a.a.9 157. The reason for considering this recension as Catholic and the others as Donatist is the reference to the anti-Donatist law of 405 which appears in the other recensions as *venit persecutio christianis*, but in the Lucensis version it appears as *venit persecutio Donatistis*. Further, the reference in the 438 version *Cecilianus dum essent veritatis ecclesiae diacones publice in Capitolio tura et evangelia concremarunt* is omitted in the Lucensis version; see *Liber Genealogus* 623-7, MGH a.a.9 196. The 455/63 Lucensis version noticeably omits references to Gaiseric as Antichrist.

108) *Dimidium Temporis* 4.6, CCSL 60 193. Out of the thousand years from the time of Daniel when the devil was imprisoned (Rev.20:7-12), seventy weeks, symbolising 490 years had passed up to the time of the *adventus salvatoris*. The thousand years would then end around AD 510; i.e., around sixty years from the time of writing. Cf. Inglebert 'Quodvultdeus et la Cité de Dieu' 316-7.

109) *Dimidium Temporis* 8.15-6, CCSL 60 200-1. Cf. Rev.17.

110) Victor 1.22 (6).

- 111) SC 101 33-60, esp. 57-60. In the case of the Sibylline literature, the author of the *De Promissionibus* only seems to have known this through Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*.
- 112) For the description of Valentinian, see *De Promissionibus* 3.38.44, CCSL 60 185.
- 113) *Dimidium Temporis* 8.16, CCSL 60 201.
- 114) *Contra Iudaeos* 6.6, CCSL 60 234. See Simonetti 'Reflessioni su Quodvultdeus' 205-6.
- 115) *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 1.6, CCSL 60 261.
- 116) *De Tempore Barbarico* 2.14.7-9, CCSL 60 486.
- 117) *De Trinitate* 1, CCSL 90 239.
- 118) E.g. *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 2.2-3, CCSL 60 262-3.
- 119) E.g. *De Promissionibus* 2.17.31, CCSL 60 101.
- 120) *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 6.17, CCSL 60 282.
- 121) *Contra Varimadum* preface CCSL 90 9. Legal imagery appears to have come readily to the mind of ecclesiastical writers of this age. Cf. VF 18.9 (93); on Facundus of Hermiane see Pewesin 63. See also Isola 146-8.
- 122) *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 7.26, CCSL 60 297.
- 123) *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 6.10-12, CCSL 60 281. For the seizure of the *haereditas... aeternae salutis* see also Victor 3.67 (57).
- 124) 6.13, CCSL 60 281.
- 125) Victor 3.65 (56-7).
- 126) See e.g. for *unitas trinitatis*, *Contra Varimadum* Preface, CCSL 90 9; Antoninus Honoratus *Epistola ad Arcadium*, PL 50 569B and 570B for *unitas divinitatis*. For *unitas aequalitatis* see *Liber Fidei Catholicae* 3, Victor 2.62 (28).
- 127) *Dimidium Temporis* 5.7, CCSL 60 194-5.

- 128) *Contra Iudaeos* 20.1, CCSL 60 255.
- 129) *De Symbolo* 3.13.4, CCSL 60 363.
- 130) *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 7.42-45, CCSL 60 299-300.
- 131) E.g. Victor 2.28 (19); *Passio Septem Martyrum* 8 (60); *Epitome Carthaginensis* MGH a.a.9 496.
- 132) *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 7.37-40, CCSL 60 299: Eugenius' Ep. to his Carthaginian flock in Gregory of Tours' *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m.1.1 41.
- 133) *Dimidium Temporis* 14.23, CCSL 60 208. Cf. Victor 3.36-7 (49-50).
- 134) *De Symbolo* 1.13.6, CCSL 60 334.
- 135) *De Ultima Quarta Feria* 6.24, CCSL 60 405.
- 136) See A. Marchetta 'Due metafore di Fulgenzio contro i Vandali ariani: *psalm.abeced.233*' *RomBarb* 5 (1980) 105-115 for the dilution of the *sal terrae* through rebaptism. Augustine is the earliest witness to the use of salt in the western liturgy: E.J. Latham *The Religious Symbolism of Salt* *Théologie Historique* 64 (Paris, 1982) 101, 103. For the burning of bread see Victor 1.20-1 (6).

Chapter 3 Appendix

The question of authorial anonymity and attribution during the Vandal period

Amongst anonymous works of the Vandal period are the *Contra Varimadum* CCSL 90 1-134, the anonymous *De Trinitate*, CCSL 90 243-259 and the *Contra Felicianum*, PL 62 333-52, later ascribed to Vigilius of Thapsus (see B.R.Voss *Der Dialog in der spätantike Literatur* *Studia et Testimonia Antiqua* 9 (Munich 1970) 366-8). It is also probable that the *Adversus Fulgentium Donatistam* also circulated anonymously at first when it came out in 430-50, though it was later, before the ninth century attributed to Augustine: C.Lambot 'L'écrit attribué à Augustin, *Adversus Fulgentium Donatistam*' *RBen* 58 (1948) 184.

The number of works of this period ascribed to Augustine is large, for instance the *Solutiones*, the *Altercatio cum Pascentio Ariano*, which was made to look like a copy of an actual controversy which had taken place. To these works should be added sermons such as those discussed in this chapter which early on (such as in sixth century MSS) were ascribed to Augustine. To these might be added an uncertain number of sermons found in collections in early medieval MSS which are collectively attributed to Augustine but some at least of which are considered to be African and of the period after Augustine. Such MSS are Wolfenbüttel 4096, Vienna 651a and Monte Cassino 17. These particular sermon collections seem to have been transmitted to or compiled in Campania, where we know that African clerics were exiled. For discussion

see J. Leclercq 'Prédication et rhétorique au temps de saint Augustin' *RB* 57 (1947) 117-131; G. Morin *Sancti Aurelii Augustini tractatus sive sermones inediti. Ex codice Guelferbytanus 4096* (Munich, 1917); C. Lambot 'Critique interne et sermons de saint Augustin' *RBen* 79 (1969) 134-47; A. G. Hamman 'La transmission des sermons de saint Augustin: les authentiques et les apocryphes' *Augustinianum* 25 (1985) 311-7.

The problem of distinguishing genuine sermons of Augustine from those put under his name, or reascribing them to another known author, has been a major preoccupation of scholars. The criteria adopted are often debateable and to a fair degree subjective. The problem itself demonstrates partly the degree of influence of the theology, exegesis and rhetorical style of Augustine on his contemporaries and posterity but also on the other hand the degree of influence of the exegesis and style of christian homiletics of this period generally. The so-called *tumor africanus* style, characterised by the manifold use of antitheses, parallels, redundancies is hardly exclusive to African homilists. They are to be found in other sermon-writers such as Ambrose (note Augustine's praise for Ambrose's pleasing style in *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.21.48-50 (129-33), CSEL 80 ed W. M. Green (Vienna, 1963) 157-9. Such criteria have been used rather too uncritically to build up and comment on the body of African, post-Augustinian sermons, e.g. J. Leclercq 'Aux origines du cycle de Noël' *Ephemerides Liturgicae* (1946) 7-26 and H. Barré 'Le cult marial en Afrique après saint Augustin' *REAug* 13 (1967) 285-317. However, latterly scholars have used increasingly sophisticated means of ascertaining Augustine's authorship, see e.g., C. Lambot 'Les sermons de saint Augustin pour les fêtes de Pâques' *RBen*

79 (1969) 148-171 and P.P.Verbraken *Etudes critiques sur les sermons authentiques de s. Augustin* (Steenbrugge, 1976).

However, there are very few fairly certain criteria by which to judge whether a sermon is African and of the Vandal period. Biblical citations can often be compared with the variants in the Old African biblical text. Apart from this, it is usually only mentions of Arian persecution which can help to identify a text as written in North Africa during the Vandal period. The problem with this is that the texts which we can assign to this period are often of a polemical nature and make persecution to be more of a dominating preoccupation for Catholic clergy than perhaps it really was. However, some amongst these, e.g. sermons like, for instance, the addresses to catechumens such as the *De Symbolo* and *De Accedentibus ad Gratiam* are of a predominantly eirenic nature, and deal with everyday pastoral teaching within the church; see R. De Simone 'The baptismal and christological catechesis of Quodvultdeus' *Augustinianum* 25 (1985) 265-282 and A. Isola 'La tipologia dell'Agnello Pasquale in [Quodvultdeus]' *Atti della V Settimana di Studi <Sangue e Antropologia. Riti e culto>* (Rome, 1984) 1203-1211. See Isola 6-16, who gives the most accessible and up-to-date list.

We should bear in mind that many sermons may have been written down or taken down anonymously before they were ascribed, often *en bloc*, to Augustine. The attribution to Augustine might not come till some time later and then because the work appeared to betray the ideas and style of Augustine.

The only writer of the Vandal period whose writings seem to have circulated under his name were those of Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe. All his works appear to have been written in exile in Sardinia or after 523, when freedom was returned to the Catholic Church. His name does not always seem to have appeared on early MSS, since his *De Fide* became attributed to Augustine and circulated widely as such during the Middle Ages, no doubt at least in part because of this attribution. Fulgentius was important enough himself to have a collection of eighty sermons accredited to him, though several have subsequently been shown to be by Augustine; see above 60. Only eight sermons are considered by Fraipont to be Fulgentius'; see CCSL 91A 888-942. Fulgentius is considered, like Augustine, to have influenced a school of sermon-writers; J.Lemarié 'Un sermon inédit sur *Matthieu* 16, 13-9 de l'école de Fulgence de Ruspe' *REA* 18 (1972) 116-23.

Though humility was quite possibly an important reason to omit one's name or include Augustine's instead, another reason for using Augustine's name was that one's work might then enjoy a greater circulation. For further discussion see B.Blumencranz 'La survie médiévale de saint Augustin à travers ses apocryphes' *Augustinus Magister. Congrès international augustinien, Paris, 21-4 Sept. 1954* (Paris, 1954) 2 1003-19 esp. 1008-13 and J.De Ghellinck *Patristique et Moyen Age: Etudes d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale* 2 (Brussels-Paris, 1947) 246-298.

CHAPTER 4

Victor of Vita's *Historia persecutionis* and the reign of Huneric

This chapter will deal with Victor's *Historia*, its author, *Tendenz*, aims and audience. As has been seen, Victor of Vita shared views in common with the groups of writers whose work has been analysed in Chapter Three, and used much of the same kind of rhetoric as they did. Victor's work deserves to be investigated separately, first, because his subject is the persecution of the African Church; and secondly, because he is our best source for the persecution, indeed he is the only surviving writer to have recorded many of the events he describes, so that his work is the nearest we come to a narrative account of the events of this period. Victor's work is in no way a history of the Vandals but rather a history of the persecution of the African Church by the Arian Vandals, told from the viewpoint of a persecuted Catholic cleric at the time when he considered the persecution to be at its height, that is, at the end of Huneric's reign.

The first book of the work recounts the persecution of the Catholics under Gaiseric. This book acts as a kind of historical introduction to Books Two and Three. In these two books, Victor gives an account of Huneric's reign, relying more on his own knowledge and first-hand experience and using official documents.' Book Two deals with Huneric's reign up to and including the conference of bishops called by Huneric in February 484, while the third and final book concentrates on the persecution of Catholics from that time up to the time of writing, which clearly fell before the death of Huneric in December 484.²

The author is named in the manuscripts as *Victor episcopus patriae Vitensis*,³ though it is clear from the work itself that Victor was not a bishop at the time when he actually wrote it but a priest of the church of Carthage.⁴ The phrase *patriae Vitensis* suggests that Victor came originally from Vita, which we know was in Byzacena.⁵ Victor appears to have been an eye-witness of a number of the events which he recorded, particularly in Carthage.⁶ Indeed, when *universus clerus ecclesiae Carthaginis* were exiled, Victor does not appear to have been amongst them - he continued to witness attacks on Catholics in Carthage, *nobis videntibus*.⁷

It seems likely then that Victor remained in hiding in Carthage. We know of an underground baptistery just outside the city walls which has been considered to date to the Vandal period.⁸ Victor, then may have tried to continue to conduct his clerical duties from such a secret place. Victor's use of official documents in his *Historia* strongly suggests that he had access to the archives of the church of Carthage to which they were sent.⁹ It may be that the archives were commended to Victor's care while Eugenius, the bishop of Carthage, and other members of the clergy were in exile, particularly since Huneric confiscated the cathedral of the Catholics, the *basilica Fausti*, apparently at the same time as he sent the clergy into exile.¹⁰ Victor was also well-informed both about political affairs in Carthage and about the movements of Byzantine ambassadors to and from Africa - indeed Victor may have had contact with them himself.¹¹ In touch with the political and religious vicissitudes of Huneric's reign as Victor was,

he may have been acting as an agent for the bishop of Carthage, particularly in his absence in exile. It has been suggested that the *Historia* was written for Eugenius, and indeed he does seem the most likely candidate.¹²

It appears that, though the work was first written in late 484, it was touched up a few years later, though attempts have been made to argue that certain phrases in the *Historia* which have been considered to be interpolations are in fact an integral part of the original text.¹³

Victor uses the term *historia* to describe his work. He says in his preface that he will describe stage by stage (*sensim*) and briefly what happened in Africa while the Arians were 'raving' (*Arrianis debacchantibus*).¹⁴ *Historia* need mean no more than a 'narration of past and present things', as Junillus would later describe it.¹⁵ Victor's work has elements in common with Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, which Victor clearly knew in the Latin translation of Rufinus, at least so far as Book Eight is concerned, where the Diocletianic persecutions are described, and which includes accounts of imperial edicts, the spread of the persecution from the army to the civilian population, and examples of martyrdom as the imperial edicts were enforced in different provinces.¹⁶ Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* Book Eight and Victor's *Historia*, especially Book Three, have much in common with the literature of the *Passiones* of the martyrs in content and form,¹⁷ but they deal with the persecutions more generally and usually omit such details as the records of the interlocution between the martyr and the judge.¹⁸

Descriptions of the tortures used and their diversity are not lacking but are often more generalised.¹⁹

However, if Victor's *Historia* has features in common with Eusebius' archetypal *Ecclesiastical History*, it lacks many others of the latter's features, such as the histories of the great bishoprics and their episcopal successions, letters and works of their bishops and detailed accounts of heresies and heterodoxies.²⁰ Victor's work does contain a number of official documents and synopses of letters, as well as the *Liber Fidei Catholicae* which the Catholic bishops sent to Huneric during the Conference of Carthage which Huneric called in February 484.²¹ However, Victor's work differs from Eusebius' in that it has a much more circumscribed aim - that is to describe the history of the persecution - and all his documents are directed to this end. Victor's work is also much more circumscribed in terms of the period it deals with and also in geographical extent - both determined by Vandal domination.

Certainly, in the Latin-speaking west, Victor's work was generically isolated. This was the result of the political and geographical isolation of the Catholics in Africa; the narrowness of its theme and the stridency and starkness of its language are a mark of the urgency of its message and the seriousness of the circumstances in which the writer found himself.²²

As Victor makes clear in his preface and at the end of his work, he wrote in praise of God.²³ Victor adapted the Augustinian concept of

history as the history of the judgement of God.²⁴ He only gives sporadic causal explanations for occurrences. Sometimes occurrences are seen as the fulfilment of biblical passages or prophecies. No doubt such explanations have coloured the details of what actually happened in order to make it approximate to the divine word;²⁵ on the other hand, the biblical passages themselves are likely to have been selected to accord with historical events.²⁶ No real explanation of events is given in terms of human causation except as expressed in terms of the virtues of the participants.²⁷ Since this is a *Historia Persecutionis*, most accounts of events begin with the evil actions of Arians. Sometimes they appear to be instigated by the Vandal king,²⁸ sometimes by his Arian clergy and advisers,²⁹ but the diabolical *hostis antiquus* always seems to be lurking in the background.³⁰

Again because the work is a *Historia Persecutionis*, and because the outcome of the persecution is as yet unclear, in the struggle between good and bad, the bad seem to prevail on earth while the good triumph in heaven.³¹ There are occasions when God intervenes to punish the impious, as when the *vindex ira* of God destroys the life of one Vandal,³² or to defend the innocent; thus Catholic exiles were not attacked by scorpions in the desert.³³ Victor sees God's influence behind events more in their details than in their general guidelines. Propitious events were needed as proof of God's intervention. The adverse situation of the Catholics explains why God cannot often be represented as intervening positively on their behalf. Victor needed to show how much the Catholics were suffering at the hands of the Vandal

Arians; at the same time, however, their apparent abandonment by God could be seen as a result of past sins.³⁴

Victor therefore reported events without fitting them into any one grand divine plan. God's actions were too inscrutable,³⁵ and Victor's work too limited in its aim for this, though there is in the work the sense of a build-up of suffering towards the present. Victor was not in a position to create either the kind of speculative overview of supernatural influence on the historical plane that is to be found in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* or the systematic providential design of Orosius' *Historiae adversus Paganos*.³⁶

Victor was in the thick of the fray: all he stood for, his faith, his race, so he believed, were threatened with extinction. Though his circumstances presented him with a serious theodical problem, he could not be seen to blame God for his plight. At the end of the work Victor portrays the destruction of the African Church in terms of the destruction of Sion, in a section which is a cento of passages taken from Jeremiah's Lamentations.³⁷ This was not an apocalyptic parallel but a threnodic one. The destruction of Sion and the consequent exodus were merely stages in the history of the City of God to which the African Church considered itself a spiritual successor.³⁸

The same passage contains supplications to the angels, patriarchs and apostles, intercessors with God.³⁹ Victor blames past sins for the *probatio* of African Christians, but separates those 'of evil desert' from those 'of holy desert', in order to explain the

justice of God, which might otherwise easily appear indiscriminate from the descriptions of suffering which Victor has just included.⁴⁰ The words *Sufficit, iam cohibe manum tuam*, in the final passage,⁴¹ seems to sum up the final message of the work.

Though Victor's work purports to be a mere *Historia*, it was, through the very fact of its being a *Historia Persecutionis*, also polemical, even propagandistic in character. The partisan and emotional nature of the work is implicit in the antithetical and polarised attributes that Victor gives to the Catholics and Arians respectively. For Victor, religious profession is the most important definition of identity; from this stem the other attributes - the Catholics are *pii* and *rationabiles*,⁴² the Arians, *impii*, *mentientes* and *insanientes*.⁴³ Orthodoxy in religious matters could transcend racial differences. Victor praised the virtues of Vandal Catholics⁴⁴ and showed his abhorrence for those with Roman names who had converted to Arianism.⁴⁵ Victor spoke often of *nostra religio* as against *sua* or *vestra religio*.⁴⁶ Religion was for him an essential element of social identity, since it helped to define the legal framework of the religious community. On the whole *Vandali* are synonymous with *Arriani* and *Romani* with *Catholici*.

The *Vandali* were also synonymous with *barbari*, according to Victor, the 'epitome of ferocity, cruelty and terror'.⁴⁷ The ferocity of the Vandals was widely stated in the fifth century, though not always in terms distinguishing them from other groups of barbarians.⁴⁸ The supposedly deliberate destructiveness of the Vandals from which their modern reputation is derived (and for which Victor's work must have been

an important source)⁶⁰ is mainly mentioned by Victor in the context of the invasion, but the *barbarus furor* against the populace continues as a motif throughout the work.⁶¹ It was manifested in raids overseas⁶² as well as within Africa, and the particular barbarity of Huneric was shown by the slaughter of members of his own family and household.⁶³ Because of their behaviour, Gaiseric and Huneric are termed *tyranni*.⁶⁴ *Barbara ferocitas* was to be found alongside the *Arriana heresis*.⁶⁵ The twofold forms of oppression, the military and the religious, combine to form a *heretica feritas* or *violentia*.⁶⁶ Victor speaks of the *multitudo Catholica sub barbara dominatione*,⁶⁷ giving a clear image of rulers and ruled, oppressors and oppressed.

Though Victor does not make the identity between Catholic and Roman explicit in the main text of his work, (except incidentally, when, concerning the Catholic Armogast, he puts into the mouth of the Arian priest Iucundus the words *si gladio peremis, incipient eum Romani martyrem praedicare*), it becomes clear that this is because the identification is so obvious in Victor's mind that it does not need stating.⁶⁸ One sermon of this period could refer to the Catholic faith as *Romana fides*.⁶⁹ After all, as bishop Eugenius of Carthage stated, the *ecclesia Romana* was *caput...omnium ecclesiarum*,⁶⁰ though this was symbolic of, rather than determining the nexus of identity between Catholic and Roman. Should the reader be in doubt, Victor made the connection explicit in this passage taken from the conclusion of his work - ⁶¹

There are some of you who delight in the barbarians and praise them in your condemnation - note their name and understand the nature of their behaviour. Can they be called by any other name besides barbarian, possessing the very title of ferocity, cruelty and terror? With whatever gifts you pamper them, and with whatever indulgences you seduce them, they know nothing else but to hate the Romans: and as much as they want they always desire to obscure the splendour and genus of the Roman name nor do they wish for any Roman at all to live. And when they are known to spare their subjects, they spare them to use for their own service, for they never liked any Roman. If their barbarian ferocity was trying to dispute about faith and argue for the Arian heresy rationally - but how can it be reasonable when it separates God the Son and Saviour from God the Father? - why carry it out with tricks and chicanery....If an episcopal conference was desired, why the hangings, burnings, the tortures and crucifixions?...why the thefts of others' possessions, not only of priests but also of all the laity?

Victor then calls upon *omnis turba Catholici nominis*: 'they should come together at the same time to the house of our grief and we

should pour rivers of tears equally from our eyes, because the cause of our faith is one and the same business'.⁶² The use of the terms *nomen Romanum* or *Catholicum* demonstrates a self-conscious concern for the identity of Catholic Romans.⁶³ This had been considerably sharpened by their proximity to a people foreign both in manner and religion - 'I do not wish for a foreign but a brotherly affection'.⁶⁴ The proximity to and the threat from outsiders had driven these two identities together to form an indissoluble whole. In the words of Arnaldo Momigliano, 'in no other surviving work is the identification of orthodox Christian with Roman asserted with such intensity of emotion' as in Victor's work.⁶⁵

Victor was greatly concerned about the fate of Roman laymen as well, particularly the most illustrious representatives of threatened *romanitas*, the aristocracy. A number of figures of political and social importance became martyrs. Their aristocratic values seem to have become associated by Victor with their piety as defenders, confessors and martyrs of the faith. He uses predicates such as *illustris*, *nobilis*, *generosus*, *honoratus*, *clarus*, and *delicatus*, all implying high birth, breeding and wealth.⁶⁶ Such positive attributes, in the writer's mind, seem to have been compounded and proved by the pious fates of those to whom they were applied.⁶⁷ The same kind of adjectives were also used to denote clerics as well as noble laypeople - *praeclari pontifices et nobiles sacerdotes* and *episcopos et laicos, claros et honoratos*.⁶⁸ The mistreatment of noble men and women and priests was a particular outrage to Victor. Of the Vandals he said, 'Neither the weaker sex, nor consideration of nobility, nor reverence for priests softened their

cruel souls, but anger was exaggerated wherever they saw the honour of dignity'.⁶⁸

To Victor there was a clear vendetta on the part of the Vandals against those institutions embodying the values with which he identified. Victor clearly felt himself aligned to the leading social, economic and political class of provincial Romans, provided they were Catholic. There was a clear identity of interest between them and the Catholic Church. Both had suffered exile and dispossession and both had an interest in supporting the cause of *romanitas* in Africa, since both had benefited from the existence of the Roman Empire.

Victor's references to *partes Africani*⁶⁹ and to the *Africana provincia* in the title⁷⁰ show that he considered Africa to be part of a larger political whole. He referred to the emperors of the past as *Christiani imperatores nostri*.⁷¹ At one point he describes how Huneric behaves towards an imperial ambassador 'with hatred of the state itself'.⁷² It was clear where Victor's political sympathies lay. Yet though it was clearly treasonable from the Vandal point of view, some residual fear and no doubt religious sanctions too prevented him from openly naming the Byzantine emperor as his political lord. The poet Dracontius was imprisoned by king Gunthamund (484-96) for addressing one of his works to another master, probably the Emperor Zeno (474-91).⁷³

In the passage cited above Victor expresses a fear of genocide and, in a wider sense, of the obliteration of a civilisation; he lived in a world turned upside-down. Victor's view of *romanitas* was a

nostalgic one of a past which he probably never knew.⁷⁴ He writes of the peace and quiet of the province and the 'beauty of the flowering earth' just before the Vandals arrived.⁷⁵ He could discern for himself and from others 'the whole of Africa once supported by so many churches, now empty of all people, endowed with so many orders of priests now sitting widowed and abject'.⁷⁶ He could see for himself the remnants of *antiqua illa speciositas civitatum*⁷⁷ and bemoan the fate of his adoptive Carthage; [Gaiseric] *antiquam illam ingenuam ac nobilem libertatem in servitutem redegit*.⁷⁸

Libertas and the *romanum nomen* also became important and related bywords in Theodoric's Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy. Theodoric wished to be seen as both a *custos libertatis et propugnator Romani nominis*.⁷⁹ In Vandal Africa at the time of Victor's writing the two had become dissociated. It is particularly interesting that Malchus tells us that at the beginning of his reign, Huneric 'had established himself as an honest friend of the Emperor [Zenon] and loved everything Roman'.⁸⁰ Victor also tells us that Huneric began to act moderately and mildly towards the Catholics, in accordance with the subtlety of barbarians.⁸¹ One important thing that Victor seems to be saying in the passage above and implicitly throughout his work to those abroad is that Huneric was no *propugnator Romani nominis*; on the contrary he hated everything Roman and has completely changed the policy of appeasement pursued in the first years of his reign. Those with influence abroad must not be deceived by the guile of the barbarians into thinking they are anything but barbarous.

In this passage, Victor initially addresses himself to those who delight in the barbarians and praise them. This has been taken as a reference to Salvian, who in his *De Gubernatione Dei*, written about 440, praised the invading Germanic tribes such as the Goths and the Vandals for living simply according to God's rule - though they followed the Arian faith they erred through ignorance. The Romans on the other hand should have known better, and as a consequence of their waywardness, God was punishing their sins through his instrument, the virtuous barbarians.⁸² Victor may have had Salvian in mind, but it is likely that he was also opposing those of his own generation in Africa and elsewhere, who, having seen the continued success of the barbarians, adopted similar attitudes. It is clear that, particularly in Huneric's reign, the Vandals were scoring many successes in converting members of the Roman provincial population to Arianism. Victor had no reason to believe this would not continue. Indeed, a council held in Rome in 487 by Pope Felix III revealed that not only were members of the laity, but also bishops and priests being rebaptised to become Arians in Africa, penances being laid down for those who had done so voluntarily and for those who had given in under duress.⁸³

Two important reasons for Victor's work emerge. First, the great stress on the difference between Vandal and Roman suggests that the distinction was in practice breaking down under pressure. Though the polarities expressed by Victor no doubt reflected some kind of reality to a self-conscious, though backward-looking group of ecclesiastics and nobles within African society, they did not take into account the inevitable everyday compromises which must have eroded such distinctions

for many, especially as the Vandal kings provided both positive and negative inducements. Secondly, Victor wished to counter any current reports of faltering faith, which might adversely affect the reputation of the African Church and people.

These reasons for writing provide a number of clues as to Victor's intended audience. His work was clearly addressed to other *Romani* and *Catholici* who would be outraged by the accounts of Vandal atrocities, written in a quirky and verbose Latin,⁵⁴ with references to Virgil (to Mezentius and to *Aeneid* 6.853 *parcere subiectos et superbos debellare*)⁵⁵ which any reader with a modicum of traditional education would have identified. Victor was clearly addressing himself to *omnis turba Catholici nominis*, or to those of them who could read the work or hear it read. Victor was concerned that the plight of African Catholics be known by all Catholics. Eugenius, bishop of Carthage, had suggested to Huneric when he showed interest in calling a conference to discuss faith, that bishops be invited from all churches in the Catholic communion. One reason Victor gives for this is that they could 'announce the calumnies of our oppression to all lands and peoples'.⁵⁶ Since Huneric opposed this plan, Victor may well, quite possibly under the instigation of Eugenius, have written his work to the same end.

Victor may indeed be seen as one of a number of Africans broadcasting the sufferings of African Catholics. Theodoret of Cyrrhus tells us that the nobleman Celestiacus had given 'a deplorable account of the African calamities' at the time of the Vandal invasions on a par with the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles.⁵⁷ Reparatus, a sub-deacon

from Tipasa in Mauretania who had had his tongue cut out by the Vandals when he refused to convert to Arianism, became a celebrity at the court of the Emperor Zeno, as several contemporary and later writers tell us. Such a figure must have helped to promote the image of African Catholics.⁸⁸ The positive accounts that Victor or others had given of the African Church had reached Rome by 495 and influenced Pope Gelasius I, who spoke of the holy and courageous resistance of African bishops, especially Eugenius.⁸⁹ Pope Symmachus (498-514) helped exiled African bishops with clothes and money.⁹⁰

However, though Gelasius was born in Africa,⁹¹ and may have adopted a more positive attitude towards African clerics than appears from the above-mentioned letter of his predecessor Felix III, his responsibility lay with the Roman Church, and Roman suspicions about the existence of *rebaptizati* amongst Africans became enshrined in a formula surviving in the *Liber Diurnus*, which dated from the time of Gelasius and prohibited Africans from entering ecclesiastical orders in Italy.⁹² Clearly the letter of Pope Felix III imposing heavy penances upon the African clergy and laity not only showed the African Catholic Church in a bad light but, also, since it was addressed 'to all bishops', broadcast the (perhaps temporary) weakness of the African Church. Felix III appears to have taken the opportunity to rule himself on this question, since the African Church appeared unable to keep its house in order.⁹³ Such a challenge to the autonomy of the African Church by the bishop of Rome, effected while the former was oppressed and divided, was of serious concern to leaders of that Church, particularly considering the old rivalry between the Churches of Rome and Carthage.

In its plight the African Church wished to enjoy solidarity with the rest of the Catholic Church, particularly with the Roman Church, the head of all Churches, and to call its representatives together to debate against the Arians in Africa. Victor tells us that that this was Eugenius' aim, and it appears also to have been Victor's aim in writing. Felix III's Roman Council of 487 may have confirmed fears that negative reports of Catholic reactions to Huneric's persecution might be spread, but Gelasius I's more positive attitude towards the African clergy suggests that heroic accounts of the resistance of Catholic clerics, and particularly of Eugenius himself, had reached the bishop of Rome, though an apparent prejudice against the African laity seems to have been confirmed by Gelasius. Victor's work was, then, to be seen in the light of the rivalry of the Churches of Rome and Carthage. Victor, as other African Catholic writers after him, continued to recognise the symbolic preeminence of the Roman Church and bishop as figurehead of the Catholic Church.⁹⁴

It has been suggested that Victor aimed his work specifically at the emperor in Constantinople and at those around him with political influence.⁹⁵ Indeed, it would be unlikely that Victor excluded these from his intended audience. It was they who could effect the political liberation of Africa, as they had attempted before in Leo's reign (though with ignominious failure). Yet Victor adopts a rather lukewarm, upbraiding attitude towards Byzantium and the east. At the end of the work, he states that Sion [the African Church] sought a *partibus orientis*, in the words of Psalm 68:21-2, 'one who was sympathetic, but there was none, one who gave comfort, and did not find him'.⁹⁶ Victor

also showed irritation at the imperial ambassador Uranius sent by Zeno in 484, who, 'coming to Carthage was boasting that he had come for the defence of the Catholic churches', but who during his stay in Carthage had been present as an impotent witness at the torturing of Catholics.⁹⁷ Victor seems to have felt that African Catholics had been abandoned by the imperial power. After the failure of the attempt under Leo in 468, no substantial help had been given to the Africans in the reign of Zeno when the Empire was preoccupied with internal struggles. Indeed it is noticeable that Victor gives Zeno the title *imperator* or *princeps* without the superlative and lofty adjectives normal in imperial address. Reading between the lines, it seems that Victor is rather cool towards Zeno for his lack of support to the African Church and people, and he hoped that the work might shame and shock him into action.

Victor's animosity towards Zeno might be partially explained by the issue of the latter's *Henotikon*, which took place in July 482.⁹⁸ The *Henotikon* was a declaration of faith intended to unite the imperial Church in agreement on a compromise formula so as to settle the Christological controversies which were still rending the Church in the eastern provinces. However, it sought to do this by relying upon the definitions of the first three Councils only. This was hardly going to endear itself to Catholic leaders in the west who were to show an unbroken attachment to the Council of Chalcedon.⁹⁹ In July 484 Felix III, bishop of Rome excommunicated Acacius, Patriarch of Constantinople, as a result of the ensuing controversy.¹⁰⁰ News of this may have reached Victor by the time he he was writing. The *Henotikon* did not however in itself stifle African Catholic links with the east; such contacts were

too important a lifeline. Indeed, the sub-deacon Reparatus, fled to the court of Zeno. We know from a letter of Gelasius I that one African bishop, Succonius, enjoyed communion with clergy in Constantinople in 493.¹⁰¹ In 499, Fulgentius as a monk intended to go to Egypt, apparently unaware that this region was not in communion with the bishop of Rome. When informed of this by an Italian bishop, he did not decide against his journey until he had taken the advice of an African bishop.¹⁰² By the 490's, the resulting 'Acacian schism' seems to have increasingly complicated the relations between the African Church and the Churches of the eastern provinces, with which which it had traditionally been in communion.¹⁰³

Finally, there is good reason to suppose that Victor wrote his work also to bolster the faith of his fellow African Catholics, to inform them of the heroic defence of their confession by their coreligionists, and to show them how they must likewise resist the wily and vicious methods being employed to convert people to Arianism.

We have seen, then, the various tendencies and biases of Victor's work, which clearly influence his interpretation of events and selection of information. Yet, though we are locked into Victor's interpretation of events (at least, where we have no other sources with which to compare his account) and though we must be aware that there is exaggeration and distortion in the generalisations which Victor extrapolates from individual detailed accounts, we have good reason to believe that he is accurate in many of his details. Not only does Victor

insert several documents, supposedly verbatim, to illustrate his points, but he was obviously an eye-witness to many of the events he recounts.

He was also concerned to back up descriptions of miracles, for instance, with the names of trustworthy witnesses, including in one case an imperial ambassador, in the way that Augustine had done in the final book of *De Civitate Dei*.¹⁰⁴ Victor had access to records, was in contact in some form with imperial ambassadors, and was in the thick of events in Carthage. He gives many details, such as names and places, which are useful to the historian.¹⁰⁵ Courtois, in his monograph on Victor's book, was struck by the accuracy of his information where it could be monitored by comparison with other sources.¹⁰⁶ It is, after all, a technique of good propaganda to be accurate on matters of fact and to make the distortions elsewhere. Factual accuracy then gives an impression of accuracy to an overall interpretation which may still be badly distorted. However, there is also good reason to believe that the general point of Victor's work, that the persecution worsened somewhat in Huneric's reign, is correct, confirmed as it is by other writers of the time and later.¹⁰⁷ Provided the biases and distortions considered above are taken into account, Victor's *Historia* is an essential source in helping us to understand what happened in Huneric's reign and why.

CHAPTER 4 NOTES

- 1) For evidence of first-hand knowledge of events - *novimus*, Victor 2.9 (15), *scimus* 2.25 (18), *nobis videntibus* 3.49). See S.Costanza 'Vittore di Vita e la *Historia persecutionis Africanae provinciae*' *VetChr* 17 (1980) 232-234. Documents include letters (e.g. 2.41-2 (22-3)) and transcripts or summations of laws (e.g. Victor 3.1-14 (40-3), 2.3-5 (14)). An English translation by J.Moorhead is available, *Victor of Vita History of the Persecution of the African Province Translated Texts for Historians* 10 (Liverpool, 1991).
- 2) Courtois 395-6.
- 3) Victor Prologue (1): S.Costanza 'Vittore e la *Historia*' 230-1.
- 4) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 7-9.
- 5) *Notitia Byzacena* 44 (67).
- 6) See n.1.
- 7) Victor 3.49 (52).
- 8) M.Duval and A Lézine 'Necropole chrétienne et baptistère souterrain à Carthage' *CArch* 10 (1959) 146. For Carthage at this time see now S.Lancel 'Victor de Vita et la Carthage vandale' *Africa Romana* 6 *Atti del VI convegno di studio, Sassari, 16-8 Dicembre, 1988* (Sassari, 1989) 649-661.
- 9) See n.1.
- 10) Victor 3.34 (49). Our only source for the confiscation of the *basilica Faustī* is in the letter of the African Church to Pope John II (535-6), *Collectio Avellana* Ep.85.1, CSEL 35 328. The *basilica Faustī* was clearly the cathedral of the Catholics in Carthage. It was here that bishop Deogratias was consecrated in 454, Pseudo-Prosper *Chronicon* -

continuatio codicis Reichenaviensis MGH a.a.9 490, and where other bishops collected to recount visions c.481, Victor 2.18-19 (17). The *basilica Faustī* appears to have been the church known now as Damous-el-Karita, just outside the Theodosian walls, where there are clear traces of a large church with three naves and a complex of buildings: Ennabli 'Topographie chrétienne. L'apport de l'épigraphie' CEA 18 (1986) 47. After the confiscation of the *basilica Faustī* the cathedral appears to have been the *basilica Sanctī Agilei* near the harbour; VF 26.10-17 (123-5); Council of Carthage 525, CCSL 149 255. The *basilica Restituta* which was the cathedral at the time of the Conference of 411 was probably confiscated by Gaiseric since it was no doubt within the walls of Carthage, *Gesta* 3.4-5, CCSL 149A 181-2; Victor 1.8 (3); see Ennabli 'Topographie chrétienne' 56.

11) Victor 2.38 (21), 3.32 (48), *qui hoc fabulosum putat, Uranium Zenonis legatum interroget* and also Victor's knowledge of occurrences at the imperial court at Byzantium suggest Victor's closeness to imperial ambassadors.

12) See H.I.Marrou 'Diadoche de Photiké et Victor de Vita' REA 45 (1943) 225-232; Courtois *Victor de Vita* 21; A.Pastorino 'Osservazioni sulla *Historia persecutionis Africanae provinciae* di Vittore di Vita' in *La Storiografia ecclesiastica nella tarda antichità. Atti tenuti in Erice, 3-8 December 1978* (Messina, 1980) 85.

13) Costanza 'Vittore e la *Historia*' 241-5; cf. Courtois *Victor de Vita* 16-17; Pastorino 'Osservazioni sulla *Historia*' 53-63. Costanza's explanation that the *sexagensimus... annus* since the Vandal invasion (429) which Victor states the work was written in could be the fault of

a scribal error when the figure was originally in Roman numerals is unconvincing, since no manuscript gives this number in numerals.

14) Victor Prologue 4 (2).

15) Junillus *De Partibus Divinae Legis* 1.3, PL 68 16D: *Discipulus: Historia quid est? Magister: Praeteritarum rerum praesentiumve narratio.* Also Isidore of Seville *Etymologiae* 1.44.5 ed W.M.Lindsay (Oxford, 1912), *historiae sunt res verae quae factae sunt.*

16) For Victor's knowledge of Rufinus see Victor 3.61 (56) and P.Wynn 'Rufinus of Aquileia's *Ecclesiastical History* and Victor of Vita's *History of the Vandal Persecution*' *C&M* 41 (1990) 187-98. The author has since informed me that he feels he has overstated the influence of Rufinus on Victor and understated that of the *Passiones Martyrum* in general (personal communication). For Rufinus see *Eusebius Werke* 2. *Die Kirchengeschichte* 2. GCS 12 ed. T.Mommsen (Leipzig, 1909). Whether Eusebius wrote Book Eight of his work, like Victor, before persecution ended, that is before 311, or after, is still a matter of debate: see e.g. T.D.Barnes 'The Editions of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*' *GRBS* 21 (1980) 191-201; and modifications to his own arguments in 'Some Inconsistencies in Eusebius' *JTS* n.s.35 (1984) 470-5.

17) See H.Delehaye *Les passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires* (Brussels, 1921) 141-165. For comparable descriptions of persecution and martyrdom cf. Rufinus 8.12.10 (GCS 12 771) and Victor 3.21 (45), 3.31 (48); Rufinus 8.9.1 and 14.12 (GCS 12 757, 785-7) and Victor 3.22 (45); Rufinus 8.9.8 (GCS 12 759) and Victor 3.27 (47).

18) For this element see Delehaye *Passions des martyrs* 177-95.

- 19) E.g. Victor 3.27 (47), *subrigat ignibus, adigat bestiis, excruciet generibus omnium tormentorum*; cf. Rufinus 8.10.5 (GCS 12 761-3). For punishments see Delehaye *Passions des martyrs* 197-207.
- 20) Examples of histories of bishoprics and their successions; Rufinus 5.6 (GCS 12 439-441), 5.12 (GCS 12 455). Writings by bishops; Rufinus 6.20-22 (GCS 12 567-569); writings by Origen 6.23-25 (GCS 12 569-79). Accounts of heresies; Rufinus 6.43 on Novatianism (GCS 12 613-23).
- 21) For laws, Victor 2.3-5 (14) and 3.1-14 (40-3). For letters 2.41-2 (22-3). For the *Liber Fidei Catholicae* 2.56-101 (26-39). It has been suggested that the *Liber Fidei* was a later insertion. See Pastorino 'Osservazioni sulla *Historia*' 63 n.61 and D.Romano 'Osservazioni sul prologo alla *Historia* di Vittore Vitense' *AAPal* 4th series 20 (1962) 35.
- 22) For the stridency of language see above 187-8.
- 23) Victor Prologue (1).
- 24) See Pastorino 'Osservazioni sulla *Historia*' 86-91 and Romano 'Osservazioni sul prologo' 28-32.
- 25) E.g. Victor 1.7 (3) shows Vandal savagery during the invasion as fulfilling 4 Kings 8:12. See Courtois *Victor de Vita* 72-4.
- 26) Victor's eye-witness description of the unpleasant conditions experienced by exiled bishops in the desert in Victor 2.31-2 (20) would seem to lie behind the choice of Lamentations 4.5, *qui nutriti sunt in croceis, amplexati sunt stercora sua* in this case.
- 27) E.g. Victor 1.12 (4), 2.17 (17).
- 28) E.g. Victor 1.17-8 (5).
- 29) E.g. Victor 2.8 (15).
- 30) E.g. Victor 3.22 (45), *ministri diaboli*.

- 31) E.g. Victor 3.59 (55), 3.46 (52). It has been argued by Roncoroni 'Sulla morte di re Unerico' 247-57 that the final chapter, Victor 3.71 (58), usually considered to be spurious, created a logical conclusion to the *Historia* since it showed Huneric being punished for his evil deeds while at the same time the theme of punishment in this world for such crimes was a leitmotif throughout the work.
- 32) E.g. Victor 1.38 (5).
- 33) Victor 2.37 (21).
- 34) E.g. Victor 3.70 (58).
- 35) E.g. Victor 3.67-8 (57).
- 36) For Orosius see F. Paschoud 'La Polemica Provvidenzialistica di Orosio' in S. Calderone (ed.) *La storiografia ecclesiastica nella tarda antichità. Atti tenuti in Erice 6-8 December 1978* (Messina, 1980) 121-36. For Augustine see e.g. G.W. Trompf 'Augustine's historical theodicy: the logic of retribution in *De Civitate Dei*' in G. Clarke (ed.) *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Rushcutters Bay, 1990) 291-326.
- 37) Victor 3.66-8 (57). For a full list of the use of phrases from Lamentations see Vittore di Vita *Storia della Persecuzione Vandalica in Africa* tr. S. Costanza (Rome, 1981) 135-7.
- 38) The destruction of Sion in 586 BC was followed by exile to Babylon; see Ezekiel 11 onwards. It is noticeable however, that the note of hope in the future found in Lamentations 3 is not present in the passages drawn on by Victor.
- 39) Victor 3.67-9 (57-8).
- 40) Victor 3.70 (58).
- 41) Victor 3.70 (58) from 2 Kings 24:16. See above 146-7.
- 42) *Pius*, Victor 1.22 (6); *rationabilis*, 2.40 (22).

- 43) *Impius* 3.53 (53), *mentiens* and *insaniens* 3.1 (40).
- 44) Victor 3.33 (48-9), 3.38 (50).
- 45) E.g. *Elpidoforus* 3.34 (49), *Liberatus* 3.49-51 (52-3).
- 46) E.g. *Nostra religio*, Victor 2.41-2 (22-3); *vestra* 2.3 (14); *sua* 2.4 (14).
- 47) For an explicit identification of *Vandali* and *Arriani*, see Victor 3.69 (58). For the identification of *Romani* and *Catholici*, 3.62-5 (56-7). See S. Costanza '"UUandali-Arriani" e "Romani-Catholici" nella *Historia Persecutionis Africanae Provinciae* di Vittore di Vita' in *Oikumene. Studi paleocristiani in onore del Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II* (Catania, 1964) 223-41.
- 48) Victor 3.62 (56).
- 49) See F. Giunta 'I Vandali e la *Romania*' *Kokalos* 2 (1956) 20-36.
- 50) See C. Bourgeois 'Les Vandales, le vandalisme, et l'Afrique' *AntAfr* 16 (1980) 213-228; Giunta 'Vandali e *Romania*' 32; Courtois 58-64.
- 51) S. Costanza '«Barbaricus furor» in Vittore di Vita' in *Sodalitas: Scritti in onore di A. Guarino* (Naples, 1984-5) 2 711-9.
- 52) Victor 1.51 (13).
- 53) Victor 2.12-16 (15-17).
- 54) *Gaiseric* - 1.9 (3); *Huneric* - 2.12 (16).
- 55) Victor 3.63 (56).
- 56) Victor 3.39 (50), 3.44 (51).
- 57) Victor 2.6 (14).
- 58) Victor 1.44 (11).
- 59) *De Accedentibus ad Gratiam* 2.13.6, CCSL 60 470: *Non crederis veram fidem tenere catholicae, quae fidem non doces esse servandam Romanam.*
- 60) Victor 2.43 (23).

- 61) Victor 3.62-3 (56).
- 62) Victor 3.64 (56).
- 63) For other contemporary uses of the term *nomen Romanum* as a definition of identity see J.Moorhead '*Libertas and nomen Romanum in Ostrogothic Italy*' *Latomus* 46 (1987) 161-8. For *Catholicae nomen* see *Chronica Gallica* a.452 (138), M.G.H.a.a. 9 662. For the term *Romani* equated with *Catholici* in Frankish and Visigothic Gaul see R.van Dam *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1985) 179. See also P.Siniscalco '*Il termine romano e i suoi significati in scrittori cristiani del V secolo*' in *Hestiasis. Studi di tarda antichità offerti a S.Calderone* Studi Tardoantichi 1 (Messina 1986) 195-222, esp. 203-13.
- 64) Victor 3.65 (56), cf. above 155.
- 65) A.Momigliano '*L'Età del trapasso fra storiografia antica e storiografia medievale (320-550 D.C.)*' *Settimane di Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo di Spoleto* 17 (1970) 115.
- 66) For *delicatus* in connection with high-birth, *Passio Septem Martyrum* 6 (60) and VF 2.24 (19).
- 67) Victor 1.5 (3), 1.14 (5).
- 68) Victor 1.6 (3).
- 69) Victor prologue 4 (2).
- 70) Victor title (1).
- 71) Victor 3.2 (40).
- 72) Victor 3.32 (48).
- 73) *Dracontius Satisfactio* 93, MGH a.a.14 119. See ch.2 n.70.
- 74) To have appreciated pre-Vandal Africa, Victor would have had to have been in his seventies or eighties at the time of writing.

- 75) Victor 1.3 (2).
- 76) Victor 3.67 (57).
- 77) Victor 1.8 (3).
- 78) Victor 1.12 (4).
- 79) See Moorhead '*Libertas and nomen Romanum*' 162-3.
- 80) Malchus fr.17, Blockley 2 424.
- 81) Victor 2.1 (14).
- 82) L.Alfonsi '*L'Historia persecutionis Africanae Provinciae di Vittore Vitense, ovvero il rifiuto di un ipocrita rinunciatarismo velleitario: Romani e Barbari*' *Gymnasium Siculorum* 16 (1978) 1-18 esp. 16-18. Salvian *De Gubernatione Dei* 7.26-8, SC 220 448-9; 7.86-9, SC 220 492-4.
- 83) Felix III Ep.7, PL 59 924-7.
- 84) See Pastorino '*Osservazioni sulla Historia*' 79-83: R.Pitkäranta *Studien zum Latein des Victor Vitensis* (Helsinki, 1978).
- 85) Victor 3.62-3 (56). Aeneid 6.853 was also used by the author of *Adversus Quinque Haereses* 2.6, CCSL 60 264, pointedly to show that David, like the Romans (and unlike the Vandals), knew how to spare his subjects and oppress the proud. It was also, of course, used by Augustine in the preface to ch.1 of his *De Civitate Dei*, CCSL 47 1, where Augustine considers that such actions were the prerogative of God, but were claimed by the earthly city as their own in praise of themselves.
- 86) Victor 2.44 (23).
- 87) Theodoret of Cyrrhus Ep.29, SC 40 86. Celestiacus was, of course describing the calamities associated with the Vandal invasion. For

Victor similarly, the eloquence of Cicero and Sallust would not suffice to describe the offences against the Church in his own day: 3.61 (56).

88) Victor 3.30 (48); Procopius *Vars* 3.8.4 (72, 74); Marcellinus Comes *Chronicon* a.484.2, MGH a.a.11 93; Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.479.1, MGH a.a.11 189. See Courtois *Victor de Vita* 81-2 nn.107-8.

89) Gelasius I *Ep.* 95.63, CSEL 35 391; see also *Ep.* 9.2, *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum Genuinae* 1 ed. A.Thiel (Brunsberg, 1867) 339-40.

The particular mention of Eugenius suggest the possibility that these reports may have come to Gelasius via southern Gaul where Eugenius had been sent into exile: Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m. 1.1 65.

90) *Liber Pontificalis* 1 125.

91) *Liber Pontificalis* 1 116.

92) PL 59 137-8; *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum* 379. See Markus 'Country bishops' 5-6. It is worth mentioning that Gelasius appears to have been behind the drafting of the letters of Felix III: H.Koch 'Gelasius im kirchenpolitischen Dienst seiner Vorgänger Simplicius und Felix III' *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie. Philhistorische Abteilung* Heft 6 (Munich, 1935).

93) See above 35.

94) Victor 2.43 (24); Fulgentius *Ep. XVII Episcoporum* 21, CCSL 91A 580 lines 602-604: *Romana, quae mundi cacumen est, tenet et docet Ecclesia*; Ferrandus *Ep. ad Severum*, PL 67 911A: *interroga...principaliter apostolicae sedis antistem, cuius sana doctrina constat iudicio veritatis, et fulcitur munimine auctoritatis*. Cf. Markus 'Country Bishops' 6.

95) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 21-2.

- 96) Victor 3.68 (57). Halm gives a *patribus orientis* but Petschenig (CSEL 7 106) prefers *partibus* from manuscript W (Vindobonensis 408, 11th century), a reading which is more sensible (who would the *patres orientis* be?). Moorhead has followed Halm's *patribus*: Victor tr. Moorhead xvii. The important point is the reference to an appeal to the east.
- 97) Victor 3.32 (48); see A.Pastorino 'Osservazioni sulla *Historia*' 101. See now Victor tr. Moorhead xviii.
- 98) See Frend *Rise of the Monophysite Movement* 177 n.4; Zacharias Rhetor *Ecclesiastical History* 5.8, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium. Scriptores Syri* 3.5 ed. E.W.Brooks (Louvain, 1924) 157-9.
- 99) See below 390-401.
- 100) J.Richards *The Popes and the Papacy in the Early Middle Ages 476-752* (London, 1979) 18, 58-61; W.H.C.Frend *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1972) 180-2.
- 101) Gelasius I *Ep.* 9, *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum* 339-41.
- 102) VF 8.16-21, 9.1-4 (49-51, 55).
- 103) Evagrius Scholasticus *Ecclesiastical History* 3.30, ed J.Bidez and L.Parmentier (London, 1898) 126. For this tradition of communion see Fulgentius *De Trinitate ad Felicem* 1.2-3, CCSL 91A 633.
- 104) E.g. Victor 1.38 (10), 3.30 (48). Augustine *De Civitate Dei* 22.8, CCSL 48 819-20 lines 188-91, 824-5 lines 387-90.
- 105) For a comprehensive list of these, Courtois *Victor de Vita* 29-63.
- 106) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 63. Courtois however, despite this, did not regard Victor as a historian, *Victor de Vita* 86 and has been challenged for this apparent contradiction in the reappraisals of Victor

by H.I.Marrou 'Le valeur historique de Victor de Vita' CT 15 (1967) 205-8 and Pastorino 'Osservazioni sulla *Historia*' 64-78.

107) For the comparison of Huneric's persecution with that of his father: Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.466, MGH a.a.11 187; *plus patre persequitur*. It is noticeable that Procopius does not mention any persecution by Gaiseric, whereas he does that of Huneric: *Wars* 3.8.3-4 (72, 74). For the location of the worst of the persecution in the last years of Huneric's reign; Marcellinus Comes *Chronicon* 484, MGH a.a.11 92-3 ; Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.479, MGH a.a.11 189-90; *Paschale Campanum* 484, MGH a.a.9 312 (though this appears to have been a later inclusion).

CHAPTER 5

The historical context of Huneric's persecution of the Catholic Church

a) Huneric's early years and the external political background to his reign

In this chapter an investigation will be undertaken into the attitude of king Huneric towards the Catholics and the various motives and factors that lay behind this and the change of policy towards the Catholics that took place during his reign. It is well worth looking into this subject because our sources tell us about it in more than just cursory detail, our main, though not our only source being Victor. In the past this subject has not been investigated as closely as it warrants. The range of policies that the king might adopt and the many and various motives and factors that might influence the direction of royal policy are made most evident through detailed investigation of Huneric's seminal reign. Indeed, since we are better informed about Huneric's reign than about his successors, an investigation of this period can help us to understand the actions and predicament of his royal successors, whose circumstances do not seem to have differed greatly from his. An investigation of the sources for Huneric's reign also tells us much about the situation of the Catholic Church and its means of survival.

Victor tells us that Huneric acted moderately and mildly at the beginning of his reign, particularly towards the Catholic religion.' It

is necessary to look at the circumstances both inside and outside Africa at this time in order to discern the influences that shaped Huneric's behaviour.

In 474, it seems, Gaiseric had made a peace treaty with the Emperor Zeno.² Gaiseric now seemed to have what he wanted. He controlled the most economically valuable parts of the old Roman province of Africa and the western Mediterranean islands (including, from 468, Sicily). The Vandal king was possibly now in his eighties.³ Olybrius, emperor of the western Empire, whom he had promoted, had died in 472 after only six months in office, to be followed by a series of ineffectual emperors. Gaiseric seems to have stopped raiding the coastal regions of Italy, which the Vandals had regularly raided in the past two decades.⁴ Indeed, it is noticeable that the last recorded raid went further afield, to Epirus, and that the historian who tells us this suggests that Gaiseric deliberately undertook it when he heard of an embassy coming from the new emperor,⁵ probably in order to give him diplomatic leverage and to perpetuate his reputation for terror. It was with this embassy, led by Severus, by whose austerity Gaiseric was impressed, or one soon after, that Gaiseric agreed to a treaty by which the two sides would abstain from mutual hostilities. Thereafter we hear of no more Vandal raids. It was through Severus also that the clergy of the church of Carthage were recalled from exile.⁶

It was no doubt important too that Theodoric Strabo, the Gothic ally of the Emperor Leo and, at times, of Zeno, stated in 473 that he was prepared to fight with his large group of Goths settled in Thrace

against anyone but the Vandals.⁷ In this, as in his Arian sympathies and his holding of the office of *Magister Utriusque Militiae Praesentalis*, he was effectively a successor to the great general Aspar.⁸ Under Zeno, Gaiseric could feel secure in the lands that he had gathered into his kingdom. In 476, a new kind of political order and stability in the western Empire was initiated when Odovacer, a Scirian leader of *foederati*, dispensed with the current emperor of the west, Romulus Augustulus, and, sending the imperial regalia to Zeno, considered himself the effective ruler of Italy on Zeno's behalf.⁹ With the seizure of Provence in 475 by Euric, king of the Visigoths¹⁰ the whole of the western Mediterranean was in the hands of Germanic kings. Gaiseric clearly felt secure enough at the very end of his reign to give Odovacer control over most of Sicily in return for a yearly tribute.¹¹

Gaiseric very probably wished his eldest son and successor Huneric to continue this policy of peaceful relations with his neighbours. It is noticeable that he had Huneric swear an oath to follow the advice of many of his own counsellors at his deathbed.¹² Also *secundum constitutionem Gaisericici*, the eldest of his male descendants should succeed one another, a system which would have prevented the instability created by the rule of a minor.¹³ Gaiseric, then, seems to have provided for a peaceful continuity and stability in external and internal politics.

As Victor tells us, Huneric was particularly indulgent towards the Catholics. Whereas Gaiseric had not allowed them to have communal services, Huneric did. It may well be that Huneric turned a blind eye to

the ordination of Catholic bishops even in Proconsularis, at least in the first few years.¹⁴ Victor says that in order to be seen to be religious he sought out and persecuted Manichaeans.¹⁵ Huneric may thereby have been demonstrating his piety in front of his Catholic opponents and attempting to impress the Catholic populace. At the same time, though, such an action served to distract attention from other divisions and at least temporarily united Catholic and Arian interests - a motive which would fit in with his politics of conciliation. Victor nevertheless claimed that nearly all the 'Manichaeans' turned out to be Arians, particularly their clerics.¹⁶ There are other indications that the first few years of Huneric's reign were generally viewed by Catholics as years of hope and relative peace. Victor recounts the visions and dreams of clerics of the Catholic cathedral of Carthage, the *basilica Fausti*, which presaged the coming persecution and symbolised the change from the present to the future. One saw their church *solito in ornatu fulgentem* with candles, lamps and coverings.¹⁷ This tranquil image is not that of a persecuted church.

The next recorded event indicates the new direction Huneric's politics were taking. Two sources record the embassy of Alexander sent by Zeno and Huneric's sister-in-law Placidia (who was Olybrius' widow) in 478 or 479.¹⁸ Malchus tells us that the envoys reported that Huneric 'had established himself as an honest friend of the emperor, loved everything Roman and was renouncing all claims on the public revenues and the other monies which Leo had earlier confiscated from his wife [Eudocia, daughter of Valentinian III, captured in Rome in 455, who fled from Carthage in 472], as well as what the emperor had seized from the

Carthaginian merchants soon after the beginning of the war and everything else over which his father had grievances against the Romans. He wished to have a secure peace and to do whatever the emperor wished'.¹⁹ Huneric wished to ratify the peace that his father had made, but he went further than Gaiseric and made very conciliatory gestures which his father was unprepared to make. Huneric clearly wished to have Zeno well-disposed towards him.

Victor tells us that through the diplomacy of Alexander, on behalf of Zeno and Placidia, Huneric was prevailed upon to allow the Carthaginian church and people to elect a bishop for the city. Huneric however, made the proviso that, the Catholics would be allowed to live according to their laws and customs and address their people in its own language, as long as the Arians in the east could do the same. If not, he promised that the clergy of all Catholic churches would be sent amongst the Moors.²⁰

Firstly, it is interesting that the emperor sought to have a bishop of Carthage chosen. Valentinian had sought to do the same in 454, when Deogratias was elected.²¹ At the same time with his ambassador present, the emperor might seek to influence the choice and put in someone conducive to imperial ecclesiastical policy. It is noticeable that the Carthaginian clergy were not necessarily keen to have a bishop. Victor said that this was because they were not prepared to accept the proviso of Huneric that Arians in the east be given equal freedoms.²²

This was no doubt true also from a selfish point of view. As Victor's transcript of the law tells us, if the Arians in the east suffered, the bishop and all his clergy would be sent into exile. A new bishop would be a liability. Interpretations of visions seen by some clergy in Carthage suggest that a policy of lying low, of survival rather than of heroism was favoured. One vision was interpreted in the words of Isaiah 26:20 'Close your door and hide a while until the anger of God should pass',²³ a rare expression of an attitude that must have been widespread but did not lend itself to good heroic propaganda. The Carthaginian clergy preferred 'Christ to guide them, who is always accustomed to guide'.²⁴ Apart from a three-year respite when Deogratias was on the throne, the Carthaginian clergy had managed to cope without a head for forty years. Indeed the clergy of this church appear to have remained a cohesive and large body (Victor considered that there were more than five hundred of them, a figure which is not impossible)²⁵ aware of the hierarchy of orders and the order of seniority within these. The Vandals, indeed, when they later punished the clergy, appear to have observed this order in doing so.²⁶

Part of the opposition of the Carthaginian clergy to the appointment of a bishop may also have stemmed from fear that imperial influence might create a figurehead who was less sensitive to African than to Byzantine feeling and who might prove in consequence a fifth columnist *par excellence* in the eyes of the Vandals and the Arian clergy (Victor tells us how Deogratias had been hounded by the Arian clergy).²⁷

Another interest group concerned about the election of a bishop of Carthage, was the apparently large, influential and highly excitable populace of that city. According to Victor, it was their clamour that overrode the reluctance of the clergy to follow the request of the ambassador and accept a bishop.²⁸ Huneric blamed the failure of the conference of Carthage in February 484 on the fact that the Catholic clergy aroused the populace.²⁹ In another instance the clergy of the *basilica Fausti* had to take steps to prevent the 'aroused populace' from crushing a man whose blindness had been healed by bishop Eugenius.³⁰ The *Passio Septem Martyrum* spoke of 'the people of that town, always faithful in the Lord, giving gifts to the gaolers, visited the martyrs of Christ [in prison] by day and night, and thus the people were strengthened in teaching and virtue of faith by them'.³¹ Though there is obviously an element of the literary topos here, the religious fervour of the people need not be denied.³² The Catholic populace of the capital, then, wielded considerable influence in political and religious matters to the degree that it could force an issue. As has been seen, this appears to be confirmed by both Catholic and Vandal sources.

Since Carthage was a capital city, the population had an influence out of proportion to its size: to quote Timothy Gregory writing of Constantinople, 'The high degree of centralisation heightened the danger since a serious disturbance in the capital might disrupt the whole functioning of the government. Thus demonstrations and even minor rioting might be accepted as a warning against more serious dangers to come'.³³ This is as true of the thriving and important port-city and governmental centre that was Carthage, as of any large city in the

eastern provinces, and this is no doubt one of the main reasons why Huneric kept some of his army stationed in the city.³⁴ The enthusiasm of the populace for a Catholic bishop may have been as important a factor in Huneric's acquiescence to it as any other.

In the event, the man elected may have been something of a compromise candidate. There appears to have been popular enthusiasm for Eugenius.³⁵ There may also have been imperial influence, since his name was of Greek origin and unusual in Africa;³⁶ if the conjectures of certain scholars are correct, he is the man to whom Victor's *Historia* is dedicated and a disciple of Diadochus of Photike, the Greek author of *One Hundred Chapters of Spiritual Perfection*.³⁷ Whether Eugenius himself came from the east or was African is uncertain. Victor tells us that 'that man of God...began to be held venerable and reverend through his good works'.³⁸ He seems however soon to have become acceptable to his own clergy, to have spoken Latin at the conference of Carthage³⁹ in 484 and at other times, and to have addressed a heartfelt letter to his congregation when sent into exile.⁴⁰

He may also have written the *Liber Fidei Catholicae* which Victor inserts into his work and which was sent to Huneric.⁴¹ This work falls very much into the Latin tradition of trinitarian theology, with extracts from Ambrose and Jerome. It is closely comparable to other African anti-Arian trinitarian works of this period in its arguments and use of biblical citations.⁴² The version transmitted by Victor suggests that it was written by a consortium of African bishops.⁴³ The entry in pseudo-Gennadius' *De Viris Illustribus* about Eugenius, however, states

that he was the author and that these bishops merely offered it to Huneric.⁴⁴ According to pseudo-Gennadius, Eugenius wrote down some *altercationes* he had held with Arian leaders and sent them to Huneric.⁴⁵ Eugenius also wrote some *preces pro quiete Christianorum... velut apologias*. It is not unlikely that the African *Psalm Collects* of the series *Visita Nos* are the ones mentioned.⁴⁶ These use the African version of the psalter throughout. In combination, these writings suggest that Eugenius was in fact African, or that, if he was not, he was very well imbued with African theological and biblical traditions.

The other point of interest concerns the proviso added by Huneric that Arian churches should enjoy equal rights in the east to those which he would allow to the Catholics in Africa. This confirms the impression that Huneric was prepared to permit or tolerate a kind of confessional pluralism in his dominions, allowing Catholics and Arians to coexist peaceably side-by-side in their own social groupings, so long as the same privilege was allowed to Arian churches in the east. The emperor in Constantinople was evidently prepared to accept this kind of mirror diplomacy, implying willingness to deal on an equal level with the Vandal king. Indeed, the existence of Arian Churches in the Empire and elsewhere allowed the Arians also to claim to be 'catholic' - that is, to be in communion with churches throughout the known world with a common doctrine. This 'catholicity' was certainly an important propaganda weapon against the Catholics in Africa.⁴⁷ However, the fact that Huneric was prepared to allow the inconvenience of having a bishop of Carthage, in return for the guarantee of the freedom of worship of

Arians in the east shows that he took this relationship with these other Arians seriously. It seems as though it was important to the Vandal Arians in Africa that they should not be isolated: there should be mutual support amongst Arians. Despite his toleration of Catholic worship, then, Huneric showed support for Arianism from early on in his reign.

The alliance may well have been more than a religious one. Victor elsewhere makes it more explicit that the Arian churches in the east are concentrated in Thrace.⁴⁸ We know that in 473, Theodoric Strabo had agreed to attack anyone but the Vandals as the Emperor Leo's ally and to allow his Gothic followers to be settled in Thrace.⁴⁹ This would suggest then that there was some kind of alliance between the Goths of Theodoric Strabo and the Vandals, along cultural, ethnic and religious lines, which ruled out military conflict between them and perhaps implied military support in certain circumstances. Whether there were any Vandal relations with the Goths of Theodoric the Amal, in the same region of the Empire, is uncertain.

There were, then, contacts and agreements of various sorts between Germanic peoples throughout the erstwhile Roman Empire to be set beside the common religious and cultural bonds between Romans and Catholics. A similar sort of mutual concern can be seen later, when Theodoric the Ostrogoth showed concern for the Arians in the east when they appeared to be threatened by the Emperor Justin I.⁵⁰ The threat of persecution could be used by both sides; it is noteworthy that the Emperor Marcian had sent to Gaiseric as an ambassador Bleda, 'a bishop

of Gaiseric's own persuasion', perhaps bearing a threat to Arians in the Empire as a means of diplomatic leverage.⁵¹

Whether Theodoric Strabo helped to promote Arian interests generally in his relations with Zeno is impossible to tell. The vicissitudes of Zeno's reign are very complex and it is unlikely that any clear or consistent policy would have emerged, as the two parties of Goths rapidly changed allegiances between themselves and Zeno.⁵² Political necessity no doubt demanded the toleration of religious differences.⁵³ At the same time that Alexander's embassy was sent (mid 478, if we accept Delmaire's dating) Strabo had moved away from a mutual alliance with Theodoric the Amal towards one with Zeno.⁵⁴ However, in 480, Strabo was in disgrace again and died in 481, and his Gothic followers seem to have eventually drifted to the other Theodoric.⁵⁵ Perhaps above all Huneric, in stating his conditions for the acceptance of the election of a bishop of Carthage, was wishing to show to the emperor his general solidarity with the Goths.

There does not appear, therefore, to have been any obvious change in imperial policy which would mean a threat to Arians in the east which would explain Huneric's change of policy towards persecution of Catholics in his own realm. Meanwhile, in addition to the Goths to the west, Zeno had to contend with the threat to his throne from the Isaurian general Illus, which persisted until 488.⁵⁶ If an external political reason is sought for Huneric's change of policy towards the Catholics to one of persecution, the most obvious is the continuing inability of the emperor to exert control over his own Empire, yet alone

beyond it. As for the western half of the Empire, it was not clear to contemporaries in 476 that emperors had disappeared from Rome forever; Odovacer's stability needed to be demonstrated. What is more, Julius Nepos, whom Zeno recognised as the legitimate emperor in the west, did not die until 480.⁵⁷ From then on the collapse of imperial power in the west must have become increasingly clear.

This was the external political setting for the change in Huneric's policy towards the Catholics from diplomacy and toleration to full-scale persecution. The change in this setting was no doubt an influential factor. As the disappearance of imperial power in the west became increasingly obvious, and as the emperor in the east became increasingly embroiled in internal struggles (so that he could not have troubled the Arians in Thrace anyway), Huneric felt he had an increasingly free hand to shape his own policy and to modify the policy of entente towards the Empire and the African Catholics which he had inherited from his father and his counsellors and which he had extended in the first years of his reign.

It has been suggested that Huneric stepped up his persecution of the Catholic Church from 483, following the issue of the *Henotikon* by Zeno, which took place in July 482.⁵⁸ However, the long schism (mainly between the churches of Rome and Constantinople) that this and consequent events were to provoke, and which weakened links between the different Churches hitherto in the Catholic communion, cannot have been so quickly and confidently foreseen by the Vandal king that he would base his domestic religious policy upon its expected occurrence. It was

not until July 484 that Felix III, bishop of Rome excommunicated Acacius, Patriarch of Constantinople.⁵⁹ However, by mid-483, it may well have become clear that such a development could only weaken the relationship between the emperor and the African Catholics.

The situation may actually have been more complicated, since the conference that was to take place at Carthage in February 484 was initially announced in June 483 in Carthage in the presence of the imperial legate, Reginus.⁶⁰ It is likely that, as had happened on previous occasions, the presence of an imperial ambassador had had some influence upon the decision of the Vandal king to adopt a measure which might appear to have been beneficial to the Catholic Church.⁶¹ This would suggest that the positive influence of the emperor in Constantinople on the behalf of the Catholics had not entirely disappeared with the issuing of the *Henotikon*. However, the imperial influence was only occasional and could not prevent Huneric from using the conference to his own ends. Theodoric Strabo and his son Recitach may have been removed from the scene by 483, but there was still Theodoric the Amal and Illus to deal with. Victor shows us that Huneric made it clear to the ambassador Uranius when he visited Carthage in 484 that the latter had no real influence in Africa by displaying Catholics being tortured along the legate's route to Huneric's palace.⁶² Zeno's preoccupation with his eastern provinces - and the issuing of the *Henotikon* and the need to placate those with a Monophysite tendency reflected this preoccupation - left Huneric with an increasingly free hand to deal with the Catholics in Africa. At the same time despite the differences that the *Henotikon* and the resulting Acacian schism must

have increasingly created, some African churchmen, at least, were still concerned to maintain the lifeline with the Empire.⁶³

b) The African context of Huneric's reign and his oppression of the Catholic Church

What then are the domestic and internal factors which influenced Huneric's change of policy? In the years immediately following the election of a bishop of Carthage, a reaction appears to have set in against the policy of entente with the emperor and toleration towards the Catholics in North Africa, with Huneric taking the initiative. Victor tells us that Arian bishops and especially Cyrila, whom Huneric later made his patriarch, suggested to the king that he should curb the freedom of Eugenius, bishop of Carthage.⁶⁴ Indeed, henceforth Huneric's actions became increasingly anti-Catholic and pro-Arian.

The actions which Victor considered to be the beginning of Huneric's persecution were the assaults on Catholics outside a church who wore barbarian dress because they were servants at the royal court.⁶⁵ This led to deprivation of salaries and then hard labour in the fields for men and the shaving of heads for women. Victor added that none 'departed from the right way'.⁶⁶ Victor was as concerned as Huneric, it would appear, that Catholics should be kept distinct from Arians. The need for this action, though, demonstrates how much the years of peace had allowed peaceful social integration of Vandals and Romans (particularly, it would seem, within the noble classes, since the

terms used by Victor to describe the Catholic royal servants *ingenui* and *delicati* normally relate to the high-born).⁶⁷ Later Huneric would decree that Arians should not eat at the same table as Catholics⁶⁸ - suggesting they were accustomed to doing so.

Huneric also ordered a measure related to the first, namely that no one should execute public functions or hold office in his court unless he became an Arian.⁶⁹ Victor tells us that Catholics who held such positions preferred to leave them rather than betray their faith. They were then deprived of their possessions and exiled to Sicily and Sardinia.⁷⁰ Victor tells us that in his day the number of armed men had declined,⁷¹ and this is echoed by the historian Malchus who tells us that 'after the death of Gaiseric the Vandals had fallen completely into softness and had maintained neither the same strength for action nor the same military establishment which he had kept ready for use, so that he always moved more quickly than his opponents calculated'.⁷² One suspects that the new accord with the Empire meant that a large well-prepared army was less important.

Certainly, we hear of no more raiding in Huneric's reign. Indeed, if anything, the expansive policy of Gaiseric appears to have been reversed in Huneric's time, the region of the Aurès being lost to the Moors.⁷³ Huneric felt that the islands of Sicily and Sardinia which Gaiseric had conquered were safe places to which to exile Catholics, as were the pre-desert areas occupied by Moors, where they were expected to be of no trouble to Vandals.⁷⁴ Huneric did not seem to fear that the Catholics might convert the Moors, rashly so perhaps, since Moorish

leaders under his successors were aware of and were prepared to exploit the division between Catholics and Arians.⁷⁵

The wish for peace, the fall in the number of men-at-arms, and its correlative, the fading martial spirit of the Vandals, all appear to coincide in this period with greater social integration across credal lines. Huneric clearly wished to claw back some of the old spirit and discipline of Gaiseric's early days by maintaining that the court and the army should be purely Arian, but this and the other evidence suggests that in fact the social and historical identity of the Vandals as the conquerors of Africa was sorely under threat.

After a short period in which he followed the policy of his father's last years, Huneric, reacting perhaps to a diminution of royal authority and struggling to overthrow the dominance of Gaiseric's advisers, wished to assert royal power within the confines of his African realm (if not in the hitherto satellite areas on the periphery). The years after the election of Eugenius saw him casting off his father's bequeathed counsellors and discarding their policies and toleration. Dietrich Claude has taken the viewpoint that Huneric's desire that his son succeed him was the reason behind the actions he took against leading Vandal nobles and eventually against the Catholic Church (the policy of conciliation having failed to secure the cooperation of the Catholic leadership).⁷⁶ I prefer to see Huneric's desire to have his son succeed as part and parcel of his policy of reestablishing his royal authority and power. This policy of building up

royal authority within Africa can be seen both in financial and fiscal affairs.

Victor tells us that it could be particularly said of Huneric that 'a king lacking revenues is a great calumniator', stating that he burdened the provinces of his kingdom with false charges and taxes.⁷⁷ It is not necessary to look far for possible explanations for royal impoverishment. The termination of the period of raiding meant the loss of a very lucrative source of booty of which the king traditionally took a substantial proportion.⁷⁸ Huneric had also, if anything, lost land within Africa. This no doubt meant also that courtiers were competing for more limited landed resources and other means of patronage within the African kingdom, such resources no doubt being the keystone of the king's political control over his officials in the provinces. Rapprochement with the Empire must have dealt a serious blow to royal finances. This may be a reason behind the numerous proscriptions of Catholics that Victor mentions.

It is within this context of squeezed royal revenues that one can understand Huneric's decision that the contents of the treasuries of all deceased Catholic bishops should be yielded up to the king.⁷⁹ It seems likely that the Catholic Church had benefited in the form of patronage from the period of entente with the Empire. It is noticeable that bishop Eugenius could always dispense sufficient alms (despite the fact that Victor says the barbarians had deprived the Church of all its money).⁸⁰ Victor himself could also later bribe the Moorish guards of exiled bishops with great gifts,⁸¹ and in 484 the richest man in Africa

was the proconsul Victorianus, who was a Catholic.⁸² Huneric now wished to draw this wealth to himself.

Huneric also stated that any new bishop who wished to be ordained had to pay the king five hundred solidi.⁸³ This was a prohibitive amount; the motive this time appears to be less economic than political. Huneric wished to curb the activities of the Catholic Church and prevent episcopal succession. Victor associated this with the attempts by the Vandals to force consecrated virgins to admit that they had slept with members of the clergy. This was a clear attempt to discredit Catholic leaders and was brutal enough to lead to the death of some of the women.⁸⁴

Victor interrupts his account of the early stages of Huneric's persecution of the Catholics to tell us of Huneric's political and dynastic purges. To Victor, such actions against his own people were a demonstration of how ruthless and tyrannical he was, and presaged how oppressive he would later be towards the Catholics.⁸⁵ Victor's account of these purges shows Huneric asserting and consolidating his position against his own relations and erstwhile counsellors. He wished to break away from the *constitutio Gaisericī*, which stated that the eldest surviving male descendant of Gaiseric should succeed, and to establish his own personal dynasty, by being succeeded by his son Hilderic.⁸⁶

Huneric now had his younger brother Theodoric exiled and Theodoric's wife and eldest son killed. He then also had Theodoric's other children and the eldest son of Genzo, Huneric's youngest brother,

exiled.⁸⁷ Victor describes Theodoric's eldest son as *magnis litteris institutus*⁸⁸ suggesting that he had had a traditional Roman education and had been influenced by Roman ways and would therefore be more acceptable to Romans. From the similar fate that Theodoric and his family suffered to that of the counsellors that Gaiseric had bequeathed, it would seem that this side of the family was in support of entente with the Empire. Theodoric's eldest son, too, was the eldest of the generation after Huneric; he should therefore have succeeded according to Gaiseric's constitution rather than Hilderic.⁸⁹ That Catholic leaders were more strongly in support of Theodoric's son than Huneric's as successor can be surmised from the sympathetic way in which the former and his family are regarded by Victor and from the fact that Huneric later tried to force Catholic bishops to swear to support his son Hilderic as successor.⁹⁰

The Vandal king also had nobles and officials put to death for favouring his brother, including Heldica, whom Gaiseric had made *praepositus regni*.⁹¹ Victor says that Gaiseric had commended many such counsellors to Huneric who swore an oath supposedly to accept them as advisers.⁹² Huneric also had burned to death Iucundus, the Arian 'patriarch', and former chaplain of Theodoric's palace, because he was well-considered by Theodoric.⁹³ Supporters of Theodoric had clearly hitherto been influential amongst Huneric's counsellors. This king now wished to choose his own advisers and establish his own dynasty, which meant ridding himself of Theodoric and his supporters, whom Gaiseric must have established in a position of power to balance that of Huneric in order to allow the successful execution of the *constitutio Gaiserici*.

Iucundus was replaced as Arian 'patriarch' by Cyrila, whom we have seen was amongst Huneric's new Arian advisers.

Huneric's policy of asserting his authority within the African kingdom (where Gaiseric's policy during most of his reign was to expand his empire) can therefore be seen in the fields of royal finance, dynastic and high politics and religious politics. As Victor said, Huneric wished to consolidate his realm,⁹⁴ and to strengthen all aspects of his royal authority. The 'persecution' of the Catholic Church must be viewed as merely one aspect of this aim. Indeed, Victor himself felt the plight of the Catholics to be comparable to that of the leading political figures supporting Theodoric.⁹⁵ He says that their beatings could have brought them eternal mercy, if they had been Catholic and had borne them in the service of their faith.⁹⁶ Victor seems to be suggesting here that the persecuted Vandal nobles would have been considered as martyrs, if only they had been Catholic, as persecuted Catholic Vandals later were.⁹⁷

The persecution of the Catholic Church appears to have reached new heights by 483 when, according to Victor, 4966 Catholic bishops and clerics were sent into exile in the pre-desert region around Chott el Hodna.⁹⁸ To judge from the fact that a bishop from Byzacena joined them voluntarily,⁹⁹ and that the clergy to be exiled were gathered at Sicca Veneria and Lares, the last towns on the road before the Proconsularis/Numidia border,¹⁰⁰ in order to be handed over to the Moors, it seems very likely that these clergy were all from Proconsularis. The number of 4966 was probably too high for the count of

clergy in Proconsularis even in prosperous times. Victor of Tonnena tells us the number was four thousand but this also included monks and laypeople.¹⁰¹ However, the fact that Victor himself was not exiled¹⁰² and that Huneric's law issued after the exile mentions the continuing disobedience of Catholic clergy in Proconsularis,¹⁰³ brings home the truth that not all clergy can have been exiled from that province.

Victor describes the unpleasant conditions that the exiled clergy endured, though his access to them en route seems to belie the statement that they were kept in close confinement.¹⁰⁴ Collected at Sicca Veneria and Lares, the clergy were told that if they did the king's bidding he would honour them.¹⁰⁵ To judge from the fact that Victor states that they attempted to persuade some children amongst them (presumably *lectores*) to be rebaptised,¹⁰⁶ it seems that this is what the king sought of the Catholic clergy.

After the exile of these clergy to Numidia, in May 483 Huneric sent an order *universis episcopis homousianis* stating that it had been prohibited not once but often for Catholic clerics to celebrate communion within the *sortes Vandalarum*. Since several had been found breaking this rule, while asserting that they held the true Christian faith, Huneric invited all Catholic bishops to a conference to be held on the Kalends of February.¹⁰⁷ Huneric was here using as his pretext a law of Gaiseric's which he himself had allowed to fall into desuetude.¹⁰⁸

Huneric also clearly wished to be seen to be solving Catholic-Arian differences on a large scale. Though Victor suggests that there was general mistrust of the Vandal king's measure,¹⁰⁹ Eugenius responded positively, but suggested that since matters of faith were of world-wide importance, he should write to all his fellow-bishops and especially to the Roman Church, *quae caput est omnium ecclesiarum*, and Huneric should write to his *amici* (fellow-rulers), so that they too should come.¹¹⁰ Eugenius clearly wished to use the Empire-wide extent of his own religious confession and its support by the emperor as a psychological means of putting pressure on the king.

This appeal to *catholicitas* and to their identity as *Catholici*, which was a source of great annoyance to the Arians,¹¹¹ was one of the few sticks that the Catholics had with which to beat their Arian persecutors. Victor explains Eugenius' reason for making the request 'not because there were lacking in Africa those who could refute the objections of adversaries but so that people would come who had greater freedom from the domination [of the Vandals] and so that they might announce the maliciousness of our oppression to all lands and peoples'.¹¹²

Huneric made his standpoint clear by replying that if Eugenius put the whole world under his rule he would agree to his suggestion.¹¹³ The king was not prepared to recognise any authority within his realm which might have claims to support from outside. He was concerned about his subjects within his own kingdom and about his sovereignty. This is clear from the fact that for the conference he summoned all the bishops

from his domain, including those from the Mauretaniae (which supposedly fell under the sway of Moorish tribes over some of whom he had some kind of hegemony) and from Sardinia and the Balearics (which did not traditionally fall within the African Church) if we are to believe the evidence of the *Notitia Provinciarum*.¹¹⁴

It may have been that in calling together all the Catholic bishops, Huneric had hoped that they might be cajoled into some kind of agreement or compromise, firstly, perhaps, concerning Trinitarian theology, secondly concerning relations with the Catholic Church in the Empire as a whole (hence the later attempt to obtain oaths from the bishops swearing that they would not send letters overseas).¹¹⁵ Huneric clearly did not wish to allow the development of a *Landeskirche* in North Africa by encouraging the Catholic Church to meet under his aegis, as Alaric II, king of the Visigoths was to do in 506 with the holding of the synod of Agde, which gathered together bishops from throughout his kingdom and allowed the bishops to deliberate upon matters of internal church discipline.¹¹⁶ The nature of the council of 484 and the events surrounding it show that Huneric was only prepared to tolerate the Catholic Church in so far as it helped to promote his royal authority and the stability of the kingdom.

Huneric's pretensions became clear when, after the conference he reissued Honorius' laws against the Donatists, now directed with a few alterations against the Catholics. The Vandal king clearly felt himself to have an authority and sovereignty in Africa equal to that of the emperor in his lands. Though imperial-style protocol and forms of

address had been used before in Vandal royal laws,¹¹⁷ such blatant use of imperial law had, so far as we know, never in the past been ventured. Because of the parallel with events in 411 and the laws that followed, the reissuing of these laws had a particular symbolism and coincided with other developments, the uniqueness of which argue strongly that this was the first time that imperial laws were reissued by a Vandal king.

Huneric may well have felt that he was the successor to imperial power in Africa, not only because of Gaiseric's conquest, but also because through his marriage he was related to the Theodosian dynasty and Honorius himself.¹¹⁸ More importantly his claim to succeed to imperial power in Africa could stem from the fact that there was now no emperor in the western half of the Empire. The course of the past few years made it increasingly unlikely that such an emperor would reappear. Huneric had also mimicked imperial manners in other ways, such as having Hadrumetum renamed Hunericopolis.¹¹⁹

In parallel with the Conference of Carthage of 411, Huneric wished to make a grand statesmanlike gesture of holding a supposedly open conference which he could supervise and influence. This was at least how Victor viewed Huneric's motives. Nor did the latter view the interim period before the conference as a period of amnesty; according to Victor he persecuted any bishop whom he had heard was learned.¹²⁰ The two bishops named whom we can identify came from Byzacena;¹²¹ so Huneric, now that he had invited all African Catholic bishops to the conference, had evidently extended his persecution to bishops from that

area. Another bishop was sent into exile even now.¹²² When the time of the conference approached, Huneric separated the most learned and skilled of the bishops in order to torment them with various accusations; among them, bishop Laetus of Nepta (in Byzacena) was burned to death 'pour encourager les autres'.¹²³ The information on the *Notitia Provinciarum*, if it is to be believed, suggests that the numbers of bishops who suffered or were martyred were minimal - one in each case.¹²⁴ However, it is clear that one of Huneric's main reasons for calling together all of the Catholic bishops was so that he could control them and oppress the potential troublemakers.

From what Victor says, it appears that the Catholic bishops conceived the conference in terms of a *cognitio extraordinaria*, the normal procedure for a civil case in the Roman law of the late Empire, where an independent administrative officer ruled on procedures, examined and made judgement and in which the roles of defendant and plaintiff were not clearly defined.¹²⁵ The Catholics with their continued attachment to Roman law, viewed the meeting as a *collatio*, where the two parties were more or less equal.¹²⁶ Instead, what they found was Cyrila, the Arian 'patriarch', in an elevated place on his throne with his assistants around him, ostensibly in the situation of a judge.¹²⁷ The Carthage Conference of 411 had been conducted like a *cognitio extraordinaria*, though the rhetoric of the chosen judge Marcellinus made it clear that he was unfavourably inclined towards the Donatists from the start.¹²⁸ The Donatists had come expecting a Church Council but found instead an imperial judicial process.

The Catholic bishops consequently set out on a juridical tack and demanded to know the source of Cyrila's authority as 'patriarch', from which his supposed authority as judge was derived. This led, according to Victor, to clamour from the Arian side, and all Catholic bishops were ordered to undergo a hundred lashes of the whip. The Catholics at this point seem to have given in to the situation and asked Cyrila to 'propose what you intend', to which Cyrila answered that he did not know Latin. The Catholics replied that everyone knew that he did. Seeing that the Catholic bishops were better prepared for the contest, Cyrila declined an audience with them, according to Victor.¹²⁹ Victor wished to show that the Catholic bishops were well-prepared; they had delegated ten amongst them to answer on behalf of all of them and had compiled a *libellum de fide* beforehand, foreseeing trouble and the need for a written document.¹³⁰ Victor includes this document, which was brought to the king on February 18th by two bishops from Numidia and two from Byzacena, though we are told elsewhere that the document was attributed to Eugenius.¹³¹

The account of the Council which Huneric gave in his subsequent edict appears to have very little point of contact with that described by Victor, making it clear that the Catholic and the Arian clergy were on two sides of a great divide, and suggesting that there was little chance that any common headway would be made towards the official purpose of the conference.¹³² The edict said that on the first day, the Arian bishops proposed that the Catholics should prove their faith, but that they did not wish to do so, revoking everything so that they aroused the people to sedition. On the second day, when asked to answer

for their case, 'everything was disturbed by sedition and shouting, so that it seemed that they had hardly intended to come to a contest'.¹²²

Since in his opinion they had not intended to come to the dispute, Huneric decided to close their churches.¹²⁴ He felt it was right to turn back upon the Catholics the laws which the Catholic emperors had imposed upon others because of their recalcitrance. Indeed, Huneric played upon the idea that bad counsel would rebound upon its authors.¹²⁵ It seems likely that Huneric had been made aware of the background behind the issuing of these laws and the course of events that led to the suppression of Donatism. Like the imperial authorities, Huneric had held a general council calling together all of the bishops, in this case both Catholic and Arian, ostensibly to decide once and for all who had the best claim to truth. Like Honorius, Huneric clearly wished that justice should be seen to be done. Though the conference of 484 appears to have been more clearly stage-managed, the chosen judge for the Conference of 411 was also biased, and the end result in both cases was the issuing of laws proscribing the sect not supported beforehand by the secular power. Both conferences were followed by intensive persecution.

The edict of Huneric was put together from passages of antiheretical laws issued by Honorius and other emperors, predominantly from the anti-Donatist laws of 412 and 414.¹²⁶ The excerpts were chosen judiciously enough to suggest that the compiler of the law was adapting them to the specific conditions he found.¹²⁷ The law prevented any kind of Catholic worship, outlawed the clergy, and confiscated any

possessions of the Church, whose buildings and possession were to be given to the Arian clergy.¹³⁹ Private individuals and public officials showing any sign of Catholic faith would suffer swingeing financial fines, or beating and exile in cases of persistence.¹³⁹ Individual to Huneric's law was the physical punishment threatened to any *iudices provinciarum* who remained Catholic.¹⁴⁰ All these punishments would be meted out to individuals who had not converted to Arianism by the Kalends of June, 484.¹⁴¹

The law was addressed *universis populis nostro regno subiectis*.¹⁴² For the first time (and here we must rely on Victor) a general law proscribing the Catholic faith was promulgated, and as we shall see, was applied comprehensively, affecting laity and clergy in all the North African provinces. With the disappearance of emperors in the western half of the Empire, Huneric clearly now felt free to adopt a quasi-imperial authority and to assert his sovereignty throughout his own lands.

Huneric adopted two contrasting policies successively in trying to ensure a stable kingdom. At the beginning of his reign he continued his father's policy of entente with the Empire and limited toleration of the Catholic Church, and indeed, pursued this policy further. Such a policy must have allowed the Catholic Church to reestablish itself perhaps at the cost of the Arian Church and seems to have helped to promote integration between Catholic Roman provincials and Vandals. Huneric, however (perhaps with factional backing in court) reacted against the threat to his royal authority and to the ethnic and

religious distinctiveness of the Vandals which the effects of his initial policy brought about. Huneric seems to have considered that the key to the stability of his kingdom and to the continued prosperity of the Vandal elite lay in removing any competitors to the succession to the crown of his sons and in controlling the Catholic leadership who were the most obvious leaders of the Romano-African population. Huneric clearly disliked the consequences of allowing certain liberties to the Catholic Church. For instance, the bishop of Carthage, whose election the king had permitted, proved to be popular and it was to Eugenius' church that Huneric prevented the entrance of Catholics who served in the royal court.

Having proscribed and removed those supporting the succession of his brother Theodoric, who seemed to be inclined towards good relations with Byzantium, Gaiseric's successor turned upon the Catholic leaders. As Huneric's reign wore on, the external political situation seems increasingly to have left the king with a free hand in his oppression of the Catholics, though two imperial embassies (that we know of) were sent after the election of Eugenius and one was apparently ineffectual.¹⁴³ Huneric began by removing Catholics from positions at court and then widened his net to include Catholic leaders within Proconsularis. He clearly wished to force these leaders to become Arian or, failing that, to remove them entirely from the kingdom. The first aim was not apparently fulfilled to any degree, nor was he entirely successful in preventing Catholic worship in Proconsularis.

Huneric then sought to extend his control over the Catholic Church in all provinces, perhaps reasoning that it could only effectively be controlled as a whole within North Africa. Evidently there continued to be relations within the Catholic Church that meant that the Church in Proconsularis was not isolated and might receive support from outside that province.¹⁴⁴ Huneric seems to have called the Catholic bishops to the conference so that he could gauge their morale and solidarity; once gathered together, he could bully them into submission and work out how to enforce his will upon them. He may have hoped to browbeat them into accepting some compromise on the theological differences between themselves and the Arian bishops just as several emperors had tried to do. When this did not meet with success he had evidently hoped that many bishops would convert to Arianism. Some did,¹⁴⁵ but a substantial proportion clearly did not, even though Huneric had threatened exile upon the recalcitrant.

c) The aftermath of the conference and the persecution of 484

Since most bishops had not given in to Huneric's laws, the king took further measures to bind the Catholic episcopate to him. He issued an order that those bishops who swore an oath to obey the contents of a charter would be allowed to return to their churches and homes.¹⁴⁶ The charter said that the oath would bind them to supporting Huneric's son, Hilderic, as his successor, and prohibit them from sending letters abroad.¹⁴⁷ The first stipulation shows such a concern with the succession that one wonders whether the illness from which Huneric died

ten months later already threatened his life.¹⁴⁸ This, indeed could be an important key to the intensity of his subsequent persecutory actions.¹⁴⁹ The second element of the oath demonstrates to what degree the Catholic bishops were perceived as potential fifth columnists within the Vandal kingdom and, in tandem with the first stipulation, suggests a fear of Byzantine intervention or influence upon the succession in conjunction with the local Catholics.

Huneric wanted the support of the Catholic hierarchy, yet clearly felt he could not trust them; however, he may at least have felt he could hold such an oath over them as a widely recognised form of legal and moral sanction and bond of loyalty. Such sanctions seem to have played an important political and social role publicly and privately both amongst the Germanic and Roman provincial population.¹⁵⁰ It is clear, however, that such an oath taken by the Catholic bishops was not felt by the king to bind them as surely to him as conversion to Arianism, since even the bishops who swore to the proposed charter were sent into some kind of exile.

Huneric may indeed have had a further motive in demanding the oath from the Catholic bishops. An imperial ruling of 456 had stated that clergy in accordance with canonical law were exempt from swearing oaths.¹⁵¹ Victor portrays the heart-searching that the bishops underwent, those hostile to the oath quoting Matthew 5:34, 'Do not swear at all', those in favour imagining the reproaches of their congregations for depriving them of their clerical offices just because they refused to swear.¹⁵²

The effect for which Huneric may well have been aiming was precisely the division and compromise among the episcopal college.¹⁵² Having thus forced many bishops into a compromise, Huneric broke his agreement, and on the pretext of their having broken the gospel injunction not to swear, the Vandal king sent those swearing into internal exile; as Victor tells us they were reduced to the status of *coloni* and sent to work in the fields.¹⁵⁴

Certainly, the deprivation of legal rights which usually accompanied banishment would have reduced their social status.¹⁵⁵ However, other evidence suggests they were not actually forced to work in the fields. The *Vita Fulgentii* says of a certain bishop from Byzacena called Faustus that, 'he was ordered to be exiled not far from his cathedra on account of his profession of the Catholic faith. The astute evilness of the tyrant and persecutor Huneric ordained this of many priests so that, undergoing the difficulty of wandering outside of their home area, they should easily be turned to denying God'. No other large-scale exile mentioned in Victor's detailed account of Huneric's reign fits that portrayed by the *Vita Fulgentii*, except for the great final persecution of the reign.¹⁵⁶ The policy of exiling bishops outside the *territorium* of their see had been employed before.¹⁵⁷ These bishops were apparently not forced to do agricultural work, nor were they necessarily isolated from other Catholics: 'in the same place where Faustus was held in exile, he had built himself a monastery, in which living spiritually, he was held honourable amongst all Christians' ¹⁵⁸ Victor, then, may well have been exaggerating the fate of the exiles.

This may also be true of the non-jurors, who were supposedly exiled to Corsica in order to cut wood for the king's ships.¹⁵⁹ Though we only know of an example from 493, well into Gunthamund's reign but before the bishops had been allowed back from exile, we know from a letter of Pope Gelasius I that an African bishop, Succonius, was at Constantinople.¹⁶⁰ Considering the rarity of the name and the frequency of scribal errors in the *Notitia*, this Succonius is likely to be the same person as Sacconius, bishop of Uzalis in Proconsularis, who is mentioned in the *Notitia* as having been exiled to Corsica.¹⁶¹ As with the later case of exile to Sardinia, it is probable that bishops in Corsica were in reality allowed freedom of movement and communication with Catholic clerics in other parts of the Mediterranean.

Exiling all the bishops made it easier for Huneric to close the Catholic churches and set about enforcing the laws promoting conversion which he had just issued. Punishments were to be imposed only on those who had not converted by the Kalends of June, and capital punishment was specified for *iudices provinciarum*,¹⁶² though exile was also specified for persistent offenders among officials and those of high social status (only one case of this is known).¹⁶³ Officials might also suffer beatings.¹⁶⁴

Yet even before the bishops were exiled, according to Victor, 'the most cruel torturers were sent out throughout the provinces and no house or place remained where there was not wailing and grief, so that no age or gender was spared except amongst those who succumbed to their will'.¹⁶⁵ Amongst those tortured or killed were aristocratic women and

children (a subject which would have a particularly poignant appeal to Victor's educated audience)¹⁶⁶ as well as *medici*, merchants, male aristocrats, and noticeably, the female relatives of bishops.¹⁶⁷ One *iudex* we know of who suffered death was the proconsul Victorianus, a wealthy and influential figure who had been a close friend of Huneric's.¹⁶⁸ Victor spoke of *quaedam generalis ista violentia tyrannorum*.¹⁶⁹ This was also directed at Vandals, whose mutilations were a common sight.¹⁷⁰ Victor held up as a witness the imperial ambassador Uranius, who would have seen torturers placed all along the way he had to take to the royal palace in Carthage.¹⁷¹ Meanwhile, many Catholics, including clerics, fled to desert places and caves to avoid persecution, only to die there of hunger or cold.¹⁷²

We can now perceive some of the policies and intentions which underlay Huneric's campaign to bring about large-scale conversion to Arianism. Huneric realised that he could not depend upon the loyalty of the *iudices provinciarum* and the *ordines civitatum*, the channels of provincial and civic authority he had inherited from the late Empire and which, mindful of Honorius' edicts, he had cited in his own edict as the official channels for the execution of his laws.¹⁷³ Instead, he relied upon the two institutions through which he could effectively enforce royal policy, the Arian Church hierarchy, backed up by his men-at-arms.

We can see the chain of command and the different branches of authority in action in Victor's description of the town of Tipasa. A former *notarius* of Cyrila, was made Arian bishop of Tipasa in Mauretania Caesariensis, 'for the losing of souls', whereupon nearly all the

citizens fled to Spain by ship. As for those who remained behind (who included Catholic clergy), the Arian bishop, first by blandishments and afterwards by threats, 'began to force them so that he should make them Arians'.¹⁷⁴ These, ignoring this, began publicly to celebrate the divine mysteries together in a house. Huneric, having heard about this through secret sources sent orders through a certain *comes* that the whole province should gather in the forum at Tipasa and that the tongues and right hands of the offenders should be cut off.¹⁷⁵ Sometimes the recalcitrant might be ordered to Carthage, where first persuasion and material encouragement might be offered, then threats and punishment.¹⁷⁶

There was also a definite policy of taking Catholic children while they were young and bringing them up as Arians.¹⁷⁷ Catholic converts to Arianism might further be used to persuade or force others to convert.¹⁷⁸ If Victor can be believed, this demonstrates the effectiveness of conversion in some cases and the need to supplement the existing hierarchy to serve the expanding church. We know of the case about ten years later, of an Arian bishop of Sicca Veneria, clearly of noble Roman provincial blood, who had under him a priest, *barbarus natione*, apparently of Vandal extraction.¹⁷⁹ Such educated and socially respectable people would have been valuable as recruits (though we do not know in this case when this man became an Arian). Ex-Catholic Arians would be aware of the arguments that could be used to convert others, and would have Catholic social connections which they could exploit.¹⁸⁰ One such convert was Teucharis, once a Catholic lector of the church of Carthage, who instigated an unsuccessful attempt to convert twelve young boys who had sung in the church under his charge.¹⁸¹

At some time in mid 484, Huneric removed a further barrier to his policy of widespread conversion by exiling all the clergy of the church of Carthage.¹⁸² Arian clerics seem to have soon resorted to actually tying up some of their more important targets, such as clerics, and forcibly rebaptising them.¹⁸³ They also took to surrounding towns at night with armed men, breaking into houses and forcing the unsuspecting inhabitants into rebaptism or torching the houses of those resisting, 'showing their heresy to be a game rather than a religion'.¹⁸⁴ The less intelligent accepted that such a baptism was valid, so this policy had some effect, but according to Victor the wiser, including the clergy, knew that baptism was invalid without the recipient's volition.¹⁸⁵

Travel was restricted to those who could demonstrate their conversion by showing a certificate - redolent of the *libelli* required during the Decian persecution.¹⁸⁶ During the great famine of summer 484, which Victor describes, many of the starving accepted the *aqua contradictionis* and were rebaptised in return for food.¹⁸⁷ Clearly, by the time Victor ended his account, in summer 484, Huneric's policy of large-scale conversion was having a great impact. The *medicus* Liberatus, who had initially resisted conversion, was led from prison to stand before the tribunal with many other people in order to accept conversion.¹⁸⁸ He ignored his wife's protest, saying 'I remain in the name of Christ a Catholic, nor will I ever be able to lose what I hold'.¹⁸⁹ As well as the argument through force, the argument through persuasion was having its effect. Indeed, within Africa it must have looked as though the Arian Church was coming to have as good a claim to *catholicitas* as the 'Homocousion' Church. The Catholic Church was badly

undermined; many people must have seen little benefit in staying with an institution that entailed such temporal disadvantage.

In exiling the bishops who had come to the conference, Huneric declared an all-out war on the Catholics, not only in Proconsularis, but throughout the Vandal kingdom. Though their circumstances might not have been as bad as Victor claimed, they were removed from the leadership of their churches and the churches were closed and any legal status they might have enjoyed was removed. Immediately after the conference Huneric seems to have begun his policy of forcing Catholics to rebaptise and torturing and killing the recalcitrant. His military power was now turned upon his Catholic subjects, especially those with social and political standing. Victor describes a calculated policy of terror, making rebaptism the price for material welfare and creating serious social and physical disadvantages for those who refused. As Catholics were converted, they were used to convert others; the process clearly threatened to change the Arian Church in North Africa into that of the majority of the Christian population, especially amongst influential people of Romano-African stock, where it had hitherto mainly been the Church of the Vandal political and military elite. This was a radical change from the confessional pluralism that Huneric had been prepared to tolerate in his own kingdom in the early years of his reign.

Diesner has suggested that the application of the persecution varied according to area and social group.¹⁰⁰ Certainly, we can be sure from other cases where Victor's statements are shown to be exaggerations that Huneric's persecution was more selective and less systematic than

appears from his account. Diesner's exceptions are not as well grounded as might appear. For instance, he cites the case of the life of the young Fulgentius as being unaffected by persecution. However, it is far from impossible that the laws which Huneric issued against officials who remained Catholic were instrumental in Fulgentius' giving up his procuratorship and living a quiet life before becoming a monk in Faustus' monastery.¹⁹¹ As Diesner accepts, Huneric's persecution was widely considered by contemporaries as particularly serious, and there are no parallels for such persecution in any of the other Germanic successor kingdoms.¹⁹²

With the succession of Gunthamund, the son of Genzo, Gaiseric's order of succession by seniority was continued and Huneric's dynastic ambitions thwarted. How far Huneric's religious policy was perpetuated after his death by Gunthamund, is uncertain. It would have been difficult to have maintained the intensity of his measures as Victor portrayed them. Despite the fact that Gunthamund has usually been viewed as adopting a milder policy towards the Catholics because he allowed the bishops to return from exile to their churches,¹⁹³ he does not seem to have done so until ten years into his reign (493/4),¹⁹⁴ with the exception of the bishop of Carthage, who was allowed to return in 487.¹⁹⁵ Procopius considered that Gunthamund 'subjected the Christians to still greater suffering' than Huneric.¹⁹⁶ Victor of Tonnena however states that Gunthamund allowed the Catholics to return at the beginning of his reign, and this has been interpreted by Courtois, correctly in my opinion, to refer to the exiled laity.¹⁹⁷

These ten years under Gunthamund, during which the bishops remained in exile, must certainly have had a very negative effect upon the cohesion and morale of the Catholic Church in Africa, and helped to attenuate the pastoral, teaching and disciplinary problems that Huneric had created or exacerbated. It must have been very difficult to communicate with home congregations from places of exile, yet alone to teach or discipline them. However, despite Huneric's systematic attempts to convert Catholics to Arianism on a large-scale after the conference, he did not succeed in destroying the Catholic Church in Africa. For Catholics, Huneric's death must have been timely. Both clergy and laity succumbed to his measures and the genuinely desperate tone of Victor at the end of Book Three strongly suggests that the survival of the Church may have hung in the balance at the time. The policy of exile perhaps in fact, indirectly helped the Catholic Church in some ways. We have seen how bishop Succonius, probably exiled by Huneric, turned up in Constantinople where Pope Gelasius heard about his taking communion with local clergy. Constantinople was the best possible place to promote the cause of the African Catholics and, if indeed this was what Succonius was doing, he would not have been the only African bishop to try this during the Vandal period. Likewise, bishop Faustus, as we have seen took advantage of his exile to pursue a monastic life, to which other Catholics were attracted.

CHAPTER 5 NOTES

- 1) Victor 2.1 (13).
- 2) See above 90.
- 3) Courtois 396.
- 4) Courtois 196.
- 5) Malchus fr.5, Blockley 2 410.
- 6) Victor 1.51 (13).
- 7) Malchus fr.2, Blockley 2 408.
- 8) For Aspar see Procopius *Wars* 3.6.2-3 (54), Clover *Gaiseric the Statesman* 40. For Theodoric Strabo see P.Heather *Goths and Romans* 332-489 (Oxford, 1991) 254-6, 67-71.
- 9) Malchus fr.14, Blockley 2 420-2; *Excerpta Valesiana* 64, ed.J.Moreau (Leipzig, 1961) 19.
- 10) E.g. *Chronica Gallica* 657, MGH a.a.9 665.
- 11) Victor 1.14 (4). Courtois 192-3.
- 12) Victor 2.15 (16).
- 13) Victor 2.13 (16); Jordanes *Getica* 169, MGH a.a.5.1 102. On this order of succession proposed by Gaiseric see Courtois 237-42 and D.Claude 'Probleme der vandalischen Herrschaftsnachfolge' *Deutsche Archiv für Mittelaltersforschung* 30 (1974) 329-55, esp. 329-37.
- 14) See Ch.6 n.59.
- 15) Victor 2.1-2 (13). We have little or no evidence of the continued existence of Manichaeism in Africa after this date. See F.Decret *L'Afrique manichéenne (IVe-Ve siècles). Etude historique et doctrinale*. (Paris, 1978) 226-33 and Markus 'Country bishops' 6.

- 16) Victor 2.1 (13). Giesecke *Ostgermanen und Arianismus* 177 shows the similarities between the Arianism of Ulfila and Manichaeism from certain theological points of view.
- 17) Victor 2.18 (17).
- 18) R.Delmaire 'La date de l'ambassade d'Alexander à Carthage et l'élection de l'évêque Eugenius' *REA* 33 (1987) 85-9 argues against the traditional 480/1 dating for the election of Eugenius (based on Victor 2.2 (13-4)) and on the basis of inscriptional evidence that show that Alexander the imperial ambassador must have gone to Carthage before 480, considers June 478 the most likely time, with June 479 also possible.
- 19) Malchus fr.17, Blockley 2 424.
- 20) Victor 2.4 (14).
- 21) Victor 1.24 (7).
- 22) Victor 2.5 (14).
- 23) Victor 1.20 (17-8).
- 24) Victor 2.5 (14).
- 25) Victor 3.34 (49). Justinian ordered that the Great Church of Constantinople (consisting of four churches) should have the number of its clergy reduced to 420, *Novella* 3.1 (a.535) in *Corpus Iuris Civilis* ed. G.Kroll and R.Schöll 3 (Berlin, 1928) 20-1.
- 26) Victor 3.35 (49).
- 27) Victor 1.27 (7).
- 28) Victor 2.5 (14).
- 29) Victor 3.6 (41).
- 30) Victor 2.50 (24).
- 31) *Passio Septem Martyrum* 9 (60).

- 32) See T.E.Gregory *Vox Populi: Popular Opinion and Violence in the Religious Controversies of the 5th Century A.D.* (Columbus, Ohio, 1979) 4.
- 33) Gregory *Vox Populi* 219.
- 34) This is suggested by Victor 3.60 (55).
- 35) Victor 2.6 (14).
- 36) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 21.
- 37) Marrou 'Diadoque et Victor' 225-32, who has found support from Courtois *Victor de Vita* 21-2, who considered that Eugenius knew Diadochus in the east rather than in Africa, and Pastorino 'Osservazioni sulla *Historia*' 85-6. For Diadochus' work, *Oeuvres spirituelles* SC 5 ed. E. des Places (Paris, 1966).
- 38) Victor 2.6 (14).
- 39) Victor 2.54 (25).
- 40) Only known from Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m.1.1 62-3.
- 41) Pseudo-Gennadius *De Viris Illustribus* 97, 111.
- 42) See Fischer 'Der Bibeltext in der pseudo-augustinischen *Solutiones*', e.g.157 and CCSL 90 290.
- 43) Victor 2.101 (39).
- 44) As n.41.
- 45) Pseudo-Gennadius *De Viris Illustribus* 97, 111.
- 46) L.Brou (ed.) *The Psalter Collects, from V-VIth Century Sources* Henry Bradshaw Society Volume 83 (London, 1949) 73-111. This identification has never actually been made but critics of the Collects seem to be in agreement that they were written in Africa after a protracted period of persecution. They are certainly prayers for peace

and for the release from persecution, see L.Brou 'Etudes sur les collectes du psautier' *Sacris Erudiri* 6 (1954) 73-95, especially 87-94, and C.Mohrmann 'A propos des collectes du psautier' *VChr* 6 (1952) 245-63. For another example where the psalms are employed to suit specific and difficult conditions see A.A.R.Bastiaensen 'Un formulaire de messe du sacramentaire de Vérone et la fin du siège de Rome par les Goths 537-8' *RBen* 95 (1985) 39-43. The collect for Psalm 150 (111) would seem to reflect the drought conditions in Africa which Victor describes in 3.55-60 (54-5) and the attendant concern of wars, heresy and schism. The fact that the African collection was preserved in Gaul is also significant, since Eugenius went into exile and died in Southern Gaul and there are independent traditions about Eugenius which come from Gaul; see Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 2.2, MGH s.r.m.1.1 63-6. Considering the importance of Eugenius and the survival of the prayers, it seems quite likely then, that the prayers are his.

47) See e.g. Victor 3.5 (41).

48) Victor 2.24 (18).

49) Malchus fr.2, Blockley 2 406-8.

50) *Liber Pontificalis* John I (523-6), 1 275.

51) Priscus 31, Blockley 2 332-4.

52) For a detailed explanation of the chronology see E.W.Brooks 'The Emperor Zenon and the Isaurians' *English Historical Review* 8 (1893) 213-222 and Heather *Goths and Romans* 273-93.

53) Cf. the case of Arians in the Byzantine army, W.E.Kaegi 'Arianism and the Byzantine army in Africa 533-46' *Traditio* 21 (1965) 23-53.

54) Malchus fr.18, Blockley 2 426-34. See Brooks 'Zeno and the Isaurians' 218-9 and now Heather *Goths and Romans* 286-90.

- 55) John of Antioch fr.211.2-5, FHG 4 618-20. Theodoric Strabo's son Recitach took over but was killed by Theodoric the Amal in 483, John of Antioch fr.214.5, FHG 4 620-1.
- 56) John of Antioch fr.214, FHG 4 620-1.
- 57) For Zeno's recognition of Nepos, Malchus fr. 14, Blockley 2 418-20. For Nepos assassination in 480, Marcellinus Comes *Chronicon* a.480, MGH a.a.11 92 and *Consularia Italica* a.480, MGH a.a.9 311.
- 58) See Giesecke *Ostgermanen und Arianismus* 181.
- 59) Gelasius I *Collectio Veronensis Ep.5*, E.Schwartz 'Publizistische Sammlungen zum acacianische Schisma' *Abhandlungen der Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaft. Philosophisch-Historische Abteilung* Neue Folge 10 (1934) 6-7.
- 60) Victor 2.38-9 (21-2).
- 61) Cf. Victor 1.51 (13), 2.3-4 (14).
- 62) Victor 3.32 (48).
- 63) See above 197.
- 64) Victor 2.8 (15).
- 65) Victor 2.8-9 (15).
- 66) Victor 2.9-10 (15).
- 67) Victor 2.10 (15).
- 68) Victor 2.46 (23).
- 69) Victor 2.23 (18).
- 70) Victor 2.23 (18).
- 71) Victor 1.2 (2).
- 72) Malchus fr.17, Blockley 2 424-6. However cf. Procopius *Wars* 3.5.20-1 (52). It is necessary to bear in mind that Malchus was critical

of Zeno and so may have wished to play up the weaknesses of his opponents; Blockley 1 80-2.

73) Procopius Wars 3.8.5 (74).

74) E.g. Victor 2.28-37 (19-21).

75) Procopius Wars 3.8.17 (78). VF 28.22-5 (139-141) also suggests that some Catholic church leaders had a diplomatic relationship with the Moors.

76) Claude 'Vandalische Herrschaftsnachfolge' 338-48.

77) Victor 2.2 (13).

78) See e.g. Malchus fr.5, Blockley 2 410.

79) Victor 2.23 (18).

80) Victor 2.7 (14).

81) Victor 2.32 (20).

82) Victor 3.27 (47).

83) Victor 2.23 (18).

84) Victor 2.9 (15).

85) E.g. Victor 2.13 (16).

86) Victor 2.12 (15).

87) Victor 2.12-4 (15-6).

88) Victor 2.13 (16).

89) Victor 2.13 (16).

90) Victor 3.19 (44).

91) Victor 2.15 (16).

92) Victor 2.15 (16).

93) Victor 2.13 (16).

94) Victor 2.17 (17).

95) Victor 2.16 (16).

- 96) Victor 2.16 (16).
- 97) Victor 2.33 (48-9).
- 98) Victor 2.26-8 (19). *Courtois* 329.
- 99) Cyprianus, bishop of Unizibiri, Victor 2.33 (20).
- 100) Victor 2.28 (19). See above 82-3.
- 101) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.479.1, MGH a.a.11 189.
- 102) Victor 2.28 (19), 2.32 (20).
- 103) Victor 2.39 (22).
- 104) Victor 2.28 (19).
- 105) Victor 2.28 (19).
- 106) Victor 2.29 (19).
- 107) Victor 2.39 (22).
- 108) Victor 1.22 (6).
- 109) Victor 2.40 (22).
- 110) Victor 2.43 (23).
- 111) Victor 3.1 (40).
- 112) Victor 2.44 (23).
- 113) Victor 2.43 (23).
- 114) Victor 2.52 (25) refers to bishops from many islands. The *Notitia Provinciarum* purports to be a record of bishops called to the conference and includes bishops from these islands; see below 262-7.
- 115) Victor 3.18-19 (44).
- 116) Cf. Claude 'Vandalische Herrschaftsnachfolge' 346-7.
- 117) See Heuberger 'Vandalische Reichskanzlei und Königsurkunden' 76-113; P.Classen *Kaiserreskript und Königsurkunde. Diplomatische Studien zum Problem der Kontinuität zwischen Altertum und Mittelalter Byzantina keimena kai meletai* 15 (Thessalonica, 1977) 107-10.

- 118) Huneric had married Eudocia, daughter of Valentinian III, probably in 457. See Courtois 396-7.
- 119) *Notitia Byzacena* 107 (68).
- 120) Victor 2.45 (23).
- 121) Praesidius, bishop of Sufetula and Mansuetus, supposedly bishop of Afufeni (the only Mansuetus to be found in the *Notitia*). Cf. Courtois *Victor de Vita* 60 n.228.
- 122) Victor 2.45 (23).
- 123) Victor 2.52 (25).
- 124) See below 269-74.
- 125) M.A.Tilley 'Dilatory Donatists or procrastinating Catholics: the trial at the Conference of Carthage' *Church History* (1990) 11;
J.A.C.Thomas *Textbook of Roman Law* (Amsterdam, 1976) 71-2, 119-21.
Victor 2.53 (25) - *Dixeruntque nostri episcopi: illa est semper grata collatio, ubi non dominatur potestatis elatio, sed ex consensu communi venit, ut cognitoribus discernentibus, partibus agentibus, quod verum est agnoscatur. Nunc ...qui est erit cognitor, qui examiner, ut libra iustitiae aut bene prolata confirmet aut prava adsumpta refellat?*
- 126) As n.113. Cf. the situation of the Donatists at the Conference of 411, outlined by Tilley 'The Trial at the Conference of Carthage' 10-1. The Catholics would have benefited from the *cognitio extraordinaria* procedure as long as the judge was favourable to them. They would have also benefited from the position of equality with the Arian bishops.
- 127) Victor 2.53 (25).
- 128) See e.g. *Gesta* 1.4, CCSL 149 54-5.
- 129) Victor 2.54-5 (25).
- 130) Victor 2.53, 55 (25).

- 131) Victor 2.56-101 (26-39) especially 2.101 (39).
- 132) For the contrast between the different accounts see Giesecke *Ostgermanen und Arianismus* 181.
- 133) Victor 3.5-6 (40-1).
- 134) Victor 3.7 (41).
- 135) Victor 2.3 (40), 2.7 (41).
- 136) Overbeck *Afrikanischen Senatsadel* 77-9.
- 137) Overbeck *Afrikanischen Senatsadel* 79-82.
- 138) Victor 3.7-8, 10 (41-2).
- 139) Victor 3.9-13 (41-3).
- 140) Victor 3.11, 13 (42-3).
- 141) Victor 3.12 (43).
- 142) Victor 3.3 (40).
- 143) Victor 2.38 (21), 3.32 (48).
- 144) Cyprianus of Unizibiri in Byzacena lent moral support to clergy exiled to the desert; Victor 2.33 (20). Victor of Vita, though a priest of the Carthaginian church, came originally from Byzacena. Several women who suffered persecution in Carthage in 484 were relatives of a bishop Germanus; Victor 3.24 (46). The only Germanus in the *Notitia* was the bishop of Feradi Minus in Byzacena, 31 (67).
- 145) Both Victor and the *Notitia Provinciarum* are silent on this important point. However, we know from Felix III *Ep.*7, PL 59 924-7 that bishops had succumbed. Gregory of Tours mentions a bishop Revocatus, *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m.1.1 66. However, the name appears suspect and may have been symbolic. It is not found in the *Notitia*. Gregory also mentions two bishops Longinus and Vindemialis, and an archdeacon Octavianus, who did not give in to rebaptism.

- 146) Victor 3.17 (44).
- 147) Victor 3.18-9 (44).
- 148) We are told in the probably spurious Victor 3.71 (58), *Passio Septem Martyrum* 2 (59) and other sources, that Huneric died through being eaten by worms. However, this was a stock form of death for a persecuting tyrant since that of Antiochus Epiphanes (2 Maccabees 9.8-9). A more immediate influence may have been Lactantius *De Mortibus Persecutorum* 33.7-8, 10, ed. J.L.Creed, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford, 1984) 50, 52. See Roncoroni 'Sulla morte di Unerico' 247-57.
- 149) Roncoroni 'Sulla morte di Unerico' 247 n.4 is dismissive of Courtois' explanation of an hypothetical illness affecting Huneric's character. However, an expectation or fear of death (which in this case was justified) might have provoked the urgency behind these measures.
- 150) E.g. the oath that Gaiseric had Huneric swear that he would follow the advice of his counsellors Victor 2.15 (16). Two brothers of Tambaia swore to one another that they would suffer the same punishments for their faith, Victor 3.28 (47). A noble, Servus of Thuburbo Maius, appears to have sworn to keep a friend's secret, Victor 3.25 (46).
- 151) *Codex Justinianus* 1.3.25.1b (a.456), *Corpus Iuris Civilis* ed. G.Krüger 3 (Berlin, 1929) 21 which states that 'clerics are, in compliance with the ecclesiastical regulations and canons established in ancient times by the most blessed bishops, forbidden to be sworn' (trans. Scott).
- 152) Victor 3.18-19 (44).
- 153) Victor 3.20 (45). See below 269-74.
- 154) E.g. 3.9-10 (41-2).
- 155) VF 3.1-2 (21). See Diesner 'Sklaven und Verbannte' esp. 115-120.

156) Faustus' monastery was obviously near Thelepte, where Fulgentius lived, VF 1.13 (11), 3.4 (21). Faustus has been identified as the bishop of Praesidium, *Notitia Byzacena* 76 (67), probably just to the south of Thelepte (Maier 187 and 308), though Lancel *Actes* 4 1447 considers he could be the bishop of Praesidium Silvani on the Gulf of Gabès. For reasons of proximity, other bishops of Byzacena were likely to be with him. Exile to the deserts in Numidia had involved clergy from Proconsularis.

157) E.g. Victor 1.40 (10).

158) VF 3.3 (21).

159) Victor 3.20 (45).

160) Gelasius I Ep. 9, *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum* 339-41.

161) *Notitia Proconsularis* 7 (63). See e.g. Maier 409.

162) Victor 3.11 (42).

163) Victor 3.10-11 (42). The only known case of exile of a layperson was that of the wife of the king's cellarer, Dagila, Victor 3.33 (48-9).

164) Victor 3.10 (42).

165) Victor 3.21 (45).

166) Victor 3.22-3 (45), 3.26 (46), 3.49 (52).

167) *Medici* - Victor 3.24 (46), 3.50-1 (53); merchants - 3.41 (50-1); male aristocrats - 3.25 (46); relatives of bishops - 3.24 (46).

168) Victor 3.27 (47).

169) Victor 3.47 (52).

170) Victor 3.31 (48).

171) Victor 3.32 (48).

172) Victor 3.52 (53).

173) Victor 3.12 (42-3).

- 174) Victor 3.29 (47-8).
- 175) Victor 3.30 (48).
- 176) *Passio Septem Martyrum* 8 (60).
- 177) Victor 3.39-40 (50), 3.49 (52-3), *Passio Septem Martyrum* 12-13 (61).
- 178) Victor 3.34 (49), 3.39-40 (50).
- 179) VF 6.1 (35) The Arian bishop was a relative of Fulgentius' parents, who came from a noble senatorial family of Carthage VF 1.1 (11) and 7.13 (43).
- 180) Cf. the case of Fastidiosus who, once a Catholic, had become an Arian and was using extracts from the writings of Fulgentius in a sermon written against Catholics and Donatists. See above 57-8.
- 181) Victor 3.42-44 (51).
- 182) Victor 3.34 (49).
- 183) Victor 3.45-46 (51-52).
- 184) Victor 3.48 (52). For an Arian priest ordering guards to seize some monks see VF 6.5 (35-7).
- 185) Victor 3.48 (52), 3.45-6 (51-2).
- 186) Victor 3.47 (52). For *libelli* in Decius' time see e.g. Cyprian *Ep.* 55.10-20, CSEL 3.2 631-8.
- 187) Victor 3.57 (55).
- 188) Victor 3.51 (53).
- 189) Victor 3.51 (53).
- 190) H.-J. Diesner 'Zur Katholikenverfolgung Hunerichs' *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 90 (1965) 893-6.
- 191) Diesner 'Katholikenverfolgung Hunerichs' 896; VF 2-3 (15-23); Victor 3.9-13 (41-3).

192) Perhaps the closest parallel are the measures that Leovigild took against Catholics in Visigothic Spain. According to Isidore of Seville he exiled many bishops, impelled many Catholics to become Arian and took away the privileges and revenues of the churches; *Historia Gothorum* 50, MGH a.a.11 287-8. For the case of bishop Masona of Merida see ch.2 n.106.

193) E.g. Courtois 300.

194) *Laterculus Regum Vandalorum* (Augiensis) 9-10, MGH a.a.11 459.

195) *Laterculus Regum Vandalorum* (Augiensis) 8, MGH a.a.11 459.

196) Procopius *Wars* 3.8.7 (74).

197) Courtois 300.

CHAPTER 6

The *Notitia Provinciarum* and the state of the Catholic Church in the 480's

The *Notitia Provinciarum et Civitatum Africae* is an episcopal list, listing the names of bishops and their sees; it is divided into provincial lists (hence the traditional name *Notitia Provinciarum*). Bishops from Proconsularis are listed first, followed by those of Numidia, then Byzacena, then the Mauretanas, then Tripolitania and finally those of Sardinia and the Balearic islands.¹ The rubric to the *Notitia* in *codex Laudunensis* 113 states that these are 'the names of the Catholic bishops of different provinces who came to Carthage to reason upon faith, on the Kalends of February in the sixth (sic) year of king Huneric'.² Various abbreviations can be found next to the names of the bishops, denoting what had happened to them; we find, for instance *prbt* beside some names which is generally considered to denote someone who had died, being a corrupt abbreviation of *perijt*.³ At the end of each provincial list the total of the number of bishops listed is given. At the end of the document are some figures telling us the total number of bishops and the total number who had died and who were exiled.⁴

The *Notitia* is well worth investigating, since it purports to give us information on the number of bishops around the time of the conference of Carthage in 484. Courtois has analysed the shortcomings of this document as a source, but in doing so did not expatiate upon its usefulness.^{4a} The *Notitia* would seem to deserve further analysis, and

perhaps more sympathetic treatment, considering its potential utility in telling us of the state of the Catholic Church at this time. It should be noted that Courtois considered that the document's reliability was vitiated by a number of anomalies between the different provincial lists, its faulty transmission and bad arithmetic rather than by the possibility that it might be an outright fabrication.⁵ Indeed, no obvious reason springs to mind why this document might be forged.⁶ If, as seems probable, the list was compiled for the use of the bishop of Carthage, false information would not be useful to him. If, on the other hand, the document had been required by the Vandal authorities to fulfil the royal decree that all bishops should be called to the conference, it would not seem to be in the interest of the Catholics to give false names or bishoprics.

The *Notitia Provinciarum* is known to us to us only from *codex Laudunensis 113*, probably of the ninth century, also containing Victor's *Historia*, where the document is inserted between the *Liber Fidei Catholicae* (which comprises the end of Book Two of Victor's *Historia*) and the beginning of Book Three. The readings of another manuscript, the now lost *codex Ludovici Halleri*, have also been preserved in Abraham Ortelius' *Thesaurus Geographicus* of 1596.⁷ The differences, numerous but slight in each case, appear to have been mainly due to scribal errors and the unfamiliarity of most of the place-names to later scribes.⁸

Victor had been preoccupied with showing the solidarity and discipline of the episcopal college and the suffering of its members before, during and after the conference.⁹ The *Notitia* may have been

included by Victor or another African cleric as a record of the size and extent of the Catholic episcopacy and its continued strength.¹⁰

Significantly, the document was inserted into the text rather than added at the end.

For this record to have been compiled, the head of the Catholic Church in Africa, Eugenius, the bishop of Carthage, would have called upon the primates of the individual provinces to submit to him a list of bishops within their provinces. Indeed, it was one of the primate's responsibilities to inform the bishop of Carthage of bishops who had died or succeeded to bishoprics within their province.¹¹ The use of this chain of command would help to explain some slight differences between the nature of these lists, most importantly the fact that the list for Proconsularis (which the bishop of Carthage would compile as head of the province) was a list of bishops, whereas those for Byzacena and Mauretania Caesariensis were lists of bishoprics (this is clear since the list for these provinces include vacant sees as well as the occupants of sees).¹²

We are also informed in the Proconsularis list of the fates of most of the bishops listed, whereas we know from the other lists only about those who had died and about a few others (including several with abbreviations which are unique to certain provincial lists).¹³ The percentage of those who had prbt against their names (and hence had died) compared with the total number of bishops in the province ranges between seven and twenty-seven %, according to province,¹⁴ which, if we take the average episcopate to last around twenty years, would

correspond to the number of bishops who would die on average between one to five years.¹⁵ This would lead one to suspect that the information on deceased bishops had been added up to five years later.

Considering the long absence of a bishop of Carthage, it would be likely that, on being chosen for this post in 478/9, Eugenius would have, not so long after, requested from the primates a list of bishops in their provinces. It would also be natural that with the issue of the decree ordering all bishops to the conference issued on May 20, 483, Eugenius would seek the information to update these lists (this would be up to five years after the initial compilation). Two such stages of compilation would seem to fit in with the provincial lists as we have them. If a new list had been required in 483, the bishoprics of deceased bishops would surely have been shown as vacant or their names would have been replaced by newly-ordained bishops. For so many bishops in the *Notitia* to have died without apparently being replaced suggests that new ordinations had been prevented for at least a few years before the information on the deceased was proffered, since we would expect new bishops to be included for the conference. The number of vacant bishoprics was however quite small as a proportion of the total number in Byzacena and Mauretania Caesariensis, where information on vacant bishoprics was given; between five and seven %.¹⁶ We can suppose that at any time there would always be some sees in the process of being filled. The high number of bishoprics and the paucity of vacant sees in the Byzacena list suggest that in the period before the list was originally compiled, new ordinations had been allowed in order to fill most bishoprics which became vacant.

This fits in with what we know of Huneric's attitude to Catholics during his reign - a period of clemency towards the Church before Eugenius' accession (when new ordinations might be allowed or not suppressed) followed by an increasingly harsh attitude, when measures were introduced which effectively prohibited new episcopal ordinations.¹⁷ The model of an original compilation of the provincial episcopal lists soon after Eugenius' accession and the addition of the information within a few years after the ordering of the conference, would seem to fit the known events of Huneric's reign. Though the heading of the *Notitia* states that it was a list of the bishops who came to the conference, the fact that the heading seems to be derived from that of the beginning of the *Liber Fidei Catholicae* and that it states that the conference was held in Huneric's sixth year rather than its eighth, as was actually the case, suggest that the heading was added to the list retrospectively by someone who did not fully understand the document.¹⁸

In practice, the *Notitia* appears to be the list of bishops collected by the bishop of Carthage. Our copy seems to be an archive version held at Carthage, which has had added to it notations which also tell us what happened to the Proconsularis bishops after the conference. The additional notations to the other provincial lists can be explained in this context. The few cases of exile in the non-Proconsularis lists and also, perhaps, condemnation *metallo* (to the mines?) are paralleled by the exile of some non-Proconsularis bishops after the conference was ordered, such as Praesidius of Sufetula (Byzacena 20) and probably Secundianus of Mimiana (Byzacena 72), whom the *Notitia* faithfully

records as being in exile.¹⁹ This makes it probable that the extra information was added after the announcement of the conference but before the conference itself. The addition of *non occurrit* ('is not coming' or 'has not come') next to two consecutive bishops in the Byzacena list (quite possibly originally a dittography) also fits into this context of additional information passed on before the actual conference.²⁰

After the conference all the bishops were either exiled to Corsica or sent into some kind of internal exile; the former applied if they did not agree, the latter if they did agree to swear to abide by the conditions of the king's charter.²¹ This can be seen from the Proconsularis list, where of the fifty-four bishops mentioned, twenty-three appear to have gone into exile to Corsica and fourteen into exile in Africa. Eugenius is mentioned as being in Tamalleni, which accords well with Victor's description of his exile to the desert near Tripolitania.²² In the other provincial lists, Corsica is not mentioned (unless 'ca.' after Pascentius Cathaquensis (Numidia 68) is an abbreviation of Corsica) while only three other bishops are noted as being in exile. It is impossible therefore to posit exile for the episcopate as a whole from this information.

Thus the information in the abbreviations added to the provincial lists except that of Proconsularis would seem to apply to the situation as it was between the order for the conference in May 483 and the conference itself in February 484. Indeed, the most obvious opportunity for gathering such information would have been at the

meeting of bishops before the conference. The additions to the Proconsularis list could have been made at any time after the exile of the bishops after the conference and after Eugenius had been exiled to Tamalleni. The fact that Eugenius had been recorded as being exile gives a *terminus ante quem* for these additions since Eugenius returned from exile in 487.²³ Considering the relation of the *Notitia* to Victor's *Historia* and Victor's access to the archives of the Carthaginian church and his continued presence in Carthage after the conference,²⁴ the additions to the Proconsularis list and the inclusion of the document in the *Historia* as it appears in some manuscripts, may have been the work of Victor himself, or that of someone close to him. Bearing in mind that few Proconsularis bishops are registered as dead, it is quite possible that this list was compiled not long before the conference. The updating of the Proconsularis list would have been easier from Carthage.

It could be argued against this suggested scheme that the list was compiled between the time of the announcement of the conference and the conference itself, with the abbreviations being added at the time of the conference or soon after. However, it would then be hard to explain the high proportion of deceased bishops (19 % overall). It is possible that such bishops could have died in exile after the conference. However, such information would have been more difficult to acquire then than at the time of the conference. If such information had been available to Victor who was in Carthage afterwards, he would surely have exploited it; however, he does not mention bishops dying in exile at this stage. What is more, the figures at the end of the *Notitia* assume that the deceased bishops had died before the decree of exile.²⁵ It has

been suggested by Schepens that the high number of dead bishops could have been caused by an incident accounted by Victor after the conference and before they were asked to swear the oath, when the bishops had sought an audience with Huneric. Victor then says that Huneric sent horsemen against them 'so that they might by such violence not only be crushed but killed'.²⁶ Victor does not actually state that any were killed, as he surely would have had this been the case; he merely says *multi contriti sunt*. This does not then sound like an incident which can explain the deaths of up to eighty-nine bishops.

The figures at the end of the *Notitia* give us the total of all the bishops in the lists (466). The number *qui perierunt* (eighty-eight) is deducted from this giving the number *qui permanserunt*, which is broken down into the following categories when compared with the Proconsularis list:

	totals given at end	Proconsularis totals
Exiled to Corsica	46	23
Exiled in Africa	302	14
Fled	28	1
Martyred	1	0
Suffered as a confessor	1	0
Grand total	378	N/A

The heading and the figures at the end appear to have been added later. Indeed, it is likely that they were not added by the same person who added the Proconsularis information. The final totals bear no

relation to the other added information on the lists. It would be strange if the writer who added the Proconsularis information and who knew the final totals had not attempted to update the information on the other provinces in some way. Also, these figures at the end of the *Notitia* assume that all the bishops who had not died attended the conference since all the bishops are accounted for numerically.

We know that in response to Huneric's order there came 'not only the bishops of the whole of Africa, but also those of many of the islands'.²⁷ The islands referred to were clearly Corsica, Sardinia and the Balearics, whose bishops appear after those of Tripolitania on the *Notitia*²⁸ and which were part of the Vandal dominion, though they did not traditionally fall under the aegis of the African Church.

At the same time, there also appear in the *Notitia* the bishops of Mauretania Caesariensis and Sitifensis.²⁹ These areas do not appear to have fallen under the direct rule of the Vandals, though as we have seen when the clergy were led into exile in southern Numidia and Mauretania Sitifensis, the Vandals seem to have had some kind of alliance with the Moors in this area.³⁰ Unfortunately, beyond this the political situation in Mauretania at this time is largely inscrutable. We know from an inscription at Altava in the far west of Mauretania Caesariensis that a certain Masuna was ruling as *rex gentium Maurorum et Romanorum* in 508.³¹ However, it is also clear the Vandals had control of the coastal town of Tipasa in eastern Mauretania Caesariensis.³² At the same time we have inscriptions from Tanaramusa, also in eastern Mauretania Caesariensis but inland, and from Kherbet el-Ma el-Abiod near

the border between Numidia and Mauretania Sitifensis (both of 474) using the era of the province of Mauretania, a dating system used from Roman times up until at least 655 rather than the dating by the year of the Vandal king or the year of Carthage, as is found in inscriptions and other documents within the Vandal kingdom.³³

We are also told by Procopius that the region of the Aurès (southern Numidia) was wrested from Vandal control in Huneric's time.³⁴ Indeed an inscription from Arris in this area tells of a certain Masties who, it has been interpreted, was *dux* for sixty-seven years and *imperator* for forty.³⁵ Carcopino held that his time as *imperator* dates from 476.³⁶ It would seem then, that the Vandals only had spasmodic and indirect control, at best, of parts of Mauretania and Numidia.

However, even if Huneric's writ did not run in these areas, it is quite possible that their bishops were invited to the conference. Gregory of Tours later mentions a bishop Longinus as suffering alongside Eugenius after the conference;³⁷ the only bishop Longinus in the *Notitia* was the bishop of Pamarina in western Mauretania Caesariensis.³⁸ Eugenius, concerned that bishops should come to the conference who might have some independence from Vandal rule, would have encouraged bishops from these areas.³⁹ Huneric too, would have probably encouraged bishops from Mauretania to come, since this might help him to substantiate claims over outlying regions of Africa and would give him control over Catholic leaders from an area which could lend support to the Catholics within his kingdom.

However, doubt has been cast in particular upon the Mauretania Caesariensis list. Apart from the repetitions of the names of bishoprics, Courtois has pointed out that only thirty-four bishoprics from Mauretania Caesariensis are known from the signature lists of the council of 411, whilst the *Notitia* mentions 126.⁴⁰ However, the Caesariensis list should not be dismissed out of hand. First, there is no representation at the council of 411 from this province to the west of Aquae Sirenses, yet this is precisely the area where Christian inscriptions from the fourth and fifth century are most numerous, and bishops from this area are known from other sources.⁴¹ It is noticeable that pope Leo, writing to the bishops of this province in 446, counselled against the setting up of bishoprics in rural settlements. There were clearly Catholic communities thriving here.⁴²

Finally, at the council of 411, the Catholics had declared that 120 of their bishops were absent, whilst sixty-four bishops were vacant. The Donatists stated that they too had absentees and vacant bishoprics, though they did not specify the number.⁴³ Some of these empty bishoprics on both sides are known to us, but most are not.⁴⁴ In addition there are about sixty bishoprics attested in the lists of the 411 council which cannot be localised to a particular province.⁴⁵ To conclude, there were clearly many more bishoprics in existence in 411 (admittedly a time when their number had been greatly expanded) than are ascertainable for specific provinces from the signature lists. It is therefore necessary to estimate upwards the known number in order to give a fair picture of the situation in 411. This is as true for Mauretania Caesariensis as for other provinces.

However, when it comes to considering whether all these bishops from Mauretania could have come to the conference in 484, the possibility of local political opposition is not the only factor to consider. To go to Carthage would have required travelling up to a thousand miles, and the problems of travelling such a distance are clear from the paucity of Mauretanian bishops at the council in 411 and from Augustine's experiences of travelling in these areas.⁴⁶

These considerations, then, lead to the conclusion that the figures at the end of the *Notitia* are incorrect in assuming that all the bishops listed attended the conference. The repetition of bishoprics in some lists only reinforces this. However, whoever added the figures at the end must have drawn his information from some source. It seems quite possible that a record had been made of the number of bishops exiled to Corsica (they would no doubt have been shipped via Carthage), and of those who had been martyred and become confessors (only one in each case). The number who had fled would have been harder to trace.

No mention is made of bishops who had given in to Vandal pressure to convert to Arianism. Given the great disabilities imposed upon the bishops, it would seem very likely that some had succumbed. Of course, we know from the letter of Felix III a few years later that at least some had. It is quite possible, then, that the large number of bishops denoted as *hic relegati* masks the number of bishops who actually gave in to Arian pressure, probably also covering up ignorance of the actual number of those exiled within Africa.

This is not to doubt that Huneric was able to get bishops whose sees lay within his kingdom to come to his conference. He clearly had a strong desire to call all these bishops together. That a large number in fact came seems clear from the fact that ten representatives were selected to speak at the conference 'in case the Arians should later say that they were overpowered by the might of our numbers'.⁴⁷ Victor also speaks of old and infirm bishops who had attended the conference.⁴⁸ Such bishops might normally be excused from attending a council.⁴⁹ Bishop Laetus of Nepta came from the far south of Byzacena to Carthage, only to be burned to death before the conference (probably the one bishop who is counted at the end of the *Notitia* under the category, *passus*). If only forty-six bishops were exiled to Corsica, they probably represented a minority of those who attended. Also, if twenty-three of the former came from Proconsularis, this would suggest that bishops from this province were particularly uncompromising in their opposition to the oath. Given the way in which Huneric had hitherto treated clergy from this province this would not be surprising.

The numbers of bishops in the various lists are worth further consideration. The lists for Byzacena and Numidia do not appear to have suffered to the same degree from the faults found in the Mauretania Caesariensis list,⁵⁰ though there are many scribal errors amongst the toponyms of the dioceses in the *Notitia* in the versions that have come down to us. The majority however are recognisable as bishoprics known to us from other evidence; a further indicator of the authenticity of the document.

In the case of the province of Byzacena, which appears to have wholly fallen into the Vandal kingdom, the number of bishoprics listed in the *Notitia* is 117.⁵¹ The signature list of the council of 411 mentions eighty-five bishoprics for this province, but, as has been stated, this must be smaller than the actual number. It is likely then, that approximately the same number of bishoprics were in existence in 411 as are attested in the *Notitia*. Victor had mentioned that a certain bishop Crescens, some time around 455, was metropolitan or primate bishop of Aqua (?) and in charge of 120 bishops. It seems likely that he was primate of Byzacena.⁵² The *Vita Fulgentii* tells us that more than sixty new bishops were elected in 502 to vacant sees.⁵³ Taking around twenty years as the average length for an episcopate and accepting the c.480 figure of 109 bishoprics, sixty or more would, in fact be the right number of sees that would be vacant after about twenty years, supposing (and this is the impression the *Vita* gives) that there had been no (or few) other episcopal elections since the *Notitia* was compiled.⁵⁴

This evidence then, would support the continuance of approximately the same number of bishoprics throughout the fifth century. The *Notitia*, as has been suggested above, was compiled after a period of clemency, which appears to have allowed the ordination of new bishops, though this was apparently later stopped. This would help to explain why the episcopal list for Byzacena was so full, with few vacancies. Indeed, forty of the Byzacenian bishoprics listed in the *Notitia* did not occur in 411. Of these forty, twelve are known to us from our other, rather more meagre conciliar sources.⁵⁵ Of course, if we

had the full lists of bishoprics in existence in 411, at least some of the others would have been known. The years before 411 had seen the setting up of many bishoprics, often in rural settlements or on landed estates, by Catholics and especially Donatists in competition with each other.⁶⁶ Lancel has suggested that at least some of the several new bishoprics with toponyms in *-ianensis* in the Byzacena list denote sees based on rural estates, suggesting the bishops in question were acting under the protection of Catholic landowners.^{66a} With a lack of central control from Carthage and perhaps within the province, it is quite possible that here, as in Mauretania Caesariensis, there had been a multiplication of rural sees or the transfer of sees to rural settlements.⁶⁷ It would be understandable if the Catholic Church in this area had taken advantage of the period of clemency to expand the number of their bishoprics.

A comparison with the situation in Numidia is instructive. As we have seen, the western and southern parts of Numidia may have, at times fallen outside the direct control of the Vandals. However, here too the situation compares closely with that in Byzacena. The *Notitia* gives us 123 bishops (there are no vacant sees mentioned) while in 411, 103 are recorded. Of the 123, thirty are not known in 411, while six of these thirty are known from other sources.^{67a} This suggests here too, the number of bishoprics was at around the 411 level at this time.

This picture does not necessarily agree with the image of general persecution that Victor wished to convey; but neither does it contradict Victor's portrayal in its details. While Victor occasionally

mentions the persecution of Catholics, particularly the clergy, in Numidia and Byzacena, Gaiseric and Huneric did not appear to follow through any general persecution in these areas until after the conference; persecution appears to have been, if anything, spasmodic.⁵⁸ The actual detail of persecution of Catholics in these palatine provinces is not then incompatible with the maintenance of the size of the episcopal college, which is surely as good an indicator as any of the general prosperity of the Catholic Church in these provinces.

Victor draws most of his examples of persecution of Catholics from the province of Proconsularis, where we know the *sortes Vandalarum* were created and where, as a consequence, particular strictures against Catholic activity were known to be enforced. We have seen how this was increasingly true after the period of leniency in Huneric's time. It is noticeable that the *Notitia* reflects the special case of Proconsularis quite clearly. While 116 settlements in Proconsularis had bishoprics in 411, there were only fifty-four recorded in 484.⁵⁹ Of the fourteen sees which appeared here and not in 411, six are not known from elsewhere, five are only known later, one is known from before and two are known both before and after 484,⁶⁰ meaning that eleven, or 20%, of the sees which are listed for Proconsularis are only known to us from 484 onwards.

This suggests that despite, or perhaps because of, the persecution, sees were having to be created in new places, perhaps those where support from a powerful landowner or Catholic community allowed the establishment or transfer of a see, echoing the pattern to be found

in Byzacena.⁶¹ It is noteworthy that when Fulgentius went to Sicca Veneria in Proconsularis sometime in the 490's, there was an Arian bishop there. The *Notitia* shows no Catholic bishop, possibly indicating that he had been displaced by the Arian bishop, who was in fact a relation of Fulgentius, and hence of a Romano-African noble background.⁶² One of the priests subordinated to this Arian bishop was based on a *fundus Gabardilla* (sic), a detail which again demonstrates the importance of the rural and local basis of the Christian communities in Africa.⁶³

But what these figures demonstrate most starkly is the great diminution in the number of bishoprics in Proconsularis from the number in 411, by comparison with the palatine provinces. Victor had said that there had been one hundred and sixty-four bishops of Proconsularis without making clear the date to which he was referring.⁶⁴ There had been in fact at least 131 bishops in 411, both Catholic and Donatist in Proconsularis and probably more.⁶⁵

We have seen how the religious policies of Gaiseric and, particularly, Huneric, must have had a serious attritional effect upon the cohesion and morale of the Catholic Church in Proconsularis. The evidence of the *Notitia*, if handled carefully, is also a useful complement to Victor when looking at the state of the Church in Byzacena and Numidia. It suggests that the episcopal college - the keystone of the Church - had been more or less maintained, probably in less difficult conditions in these provinces by comparison with that in Proconsularis. The picture that the *Notitia* gives us matches up with the

general picture that Victor portrays of a persecution which was concentrated in Proconsularis but selective in other province. This was the case, it seems, until after the conference in 484, when systematic attempts to liquidate the Catholic Church and force the conversion of Catholics to Arians were directed not only against the clergy but also the laity in all the provinces of the Vandal kingdom.

CHAPTER 6 NOTES

1) *Notitia* (63-71). In the notes that follow, the name of the province followed by numbers denote the provincial list and the ordinal number within this list.

2) *Notitia* (63).

3) I agree with P.Schepens 'A propos du sigle <prbt> dans la *Notitia provinciarum et civitatum Africae*' *RSR* 6 (1916) 139-48 and 'A propos du sigle <prbt>. Notes complémentaires' *RSR* 6 (1919) 369-70 that the *prbt* notation must be a deformation of *perit*, See too Courtois Victor 92 n.10. At the end of the document after the total number of bishops it is stated *ex quibus perierunt lxxxviii*. There are actually eighty-nine occurrences of *prbt*. For the use of *perire* in such a context, Council of Carthage 525, CCSL 149 260 line 249.

4) *Notitia* (71).

4a) A basic discussion of numbers can also be found in A.Schwarze *Untersuchungen über die äussere Entwicklung der afrikanische Kirche mit besonderer Verwertung der archäologische Funde* (Göttingen, 1892) 162-7 and Courtois 111 n.1. The analysis of the information in the *Notitia* and other documents in this chapter will draw greatly upon the lists of bishops and bishoprics compiled by Maier (bearing in mind the criticisms of M.Duval 'Une nouvelle édition des listes épiscopales africaines' *REA* 20 (1974) 313-22). Though modifications to our knowledge of toponymy from articles such as those in DHGE, have also been taken into account (e.g. Lancel considers that Gigthis is in Tripolitania while Maier has put it in Byzacena, DHGE 21.298), such modifications have made little difference to the overall picture. Statistics given are,

considering the limitation and uncertainty of our sources, only intended as a rough guide.

5) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 91-100.

6) The authenticity of the document is also supported by the fact that some of the bishops mentioned in the *Notitia* appear in other sources. See Praesidius of Sufetula; Victor 2.45 (23), Byzacena 20. Januarius Zattarensis, Villaticus de Casis Medianensis, Bonifatius Foratianensis; Victor 2.101 (39), Numidia 50, Numidia 29, Byzacena 66. Reparatus Puppiensis; Acts of Council of Carthage, 525, CCSL 149 279 line 271, Proconsularis 12. Vindemialis Capsensis; *Passio Septem Martyrum* 7 (60), Byzacena 60. Vigilius Thapsensis; see Ficker *Studien zu Vigilius* 16-7, Byzacena 109.

7) A.Ortelius *Thesaurus Geographicus auctus et recognitus* (Antwerp, 1596) *passim*; see also PL 58 267-70.

8) E.g. Courtois *Victor de Vita* 99.

9) See above 230-47.

10) G.Capello 'Il latino di Vittore di Vita' *Atti della Società italiana per il progresso della scienze (riunione XIV)* 16 (1937) 83, considered that Victor himself compiled the document. Considering his access to Carthaginian archives this is not impossible. Such a document would have been most readily available to African clerics.

11) See acts of the Council of Carthage of 525, CCSL 149 257 line 87, 267 line 566.

12) See Courtois *Victor de Vita* 93-4, *Notitia* (63-71).

13) See Courtois *Victor de Vita* 92. *Corsica*, *Hic*, *Fug.*, *ut sup.* are only found in the Proconsularis list. *Metallo* and *Na/Nam* are only found

in the Numidian list and *Non occurrit* is only found in the Byzacena list.

14) For the frequency of occurrence of this notation by province:-

Proconsularis; four of fifty-four - 7.4%. Numidia; thirty-five of 123 - 27.6%. Byzacena; ten out of 109 - 9.2%. Mauretania Caesariensis; thirty-three of 120 - 27.5%. Mauretania Sitifensis; eight of forty-two - 19%.

See *Notitia* (63-71). The differences in the percentages might suggest that these episcopal lists were submitted to Carthage at different times within this timespan. That of Proconsularis could be more readily updated for geographical reasons.

15) We have, unfortunately only a small sample of African bishops, the duration of whose episcopates we can be sure about. Those whose are of a long duration were most likely to attract attention so that our estimates from the following figures are likely to be on the high side. One bishop known to us Felix Abbiritanus is known to us only because of his exceptionally long episcopate of forty-four years. The durations of episcopates obtained from inscriptions are, on the whole, lower and were those of bishops, in all cases but one, not otherwise known so that they may give us more typical information. However the information as a whole allows us an approximation.

Aurelius (Carthage)	37 years	Maier 262-3
Capreolus (Carthage)	9	Maier 274
Deogratias (Carthage)	3	Victor 1.27 (7)
Eugenius (Carthage)	26/7	Maier 303
Augustine (Hippo)	35	Maier 259-60
Felix (Abbir)	44	Victor 2.26 (19)

Fulgentius (Ruspe)	25	VF 28.17 (139)
Novatus (Sitifi)	37	ILCV 1101
Nemessanus (Ala Miliaria)	17	ILCV 1108
Reparatus	10	ILCV 1105
Rutilius	23	ILCV 1107B
Palladius	12	ILCV 1100
Lucius	22	ILCV 1111
Unnamed bishop	18	CIL 8 9286

The average of this available sample is twenty three years. However, as has been argued, a lower figure would no doubt be more realistic. The average from the figures from the inscriptions alone comes to twenty. This is perhaps more representative, though a lower figure again is imaginable.

16) Byzacena; eight out of 117 (7%). Mauretania Caesariensis; six out of 126 (5%). *Notitia* (66-70).

17) Victor 2.25 (18).

18) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 93. Cf. *Ac sic fiunt omnes episcopi diversarum provinciarum* of the final totals section (*Notitia* (71)), with *Incipiunt nomina episcoporum catholicorum diversarum provinciarum* of the heading (*Notitia* (63)).

19) Cf. Victor 2.45 (23). *Vibianum secundidonatianum...episcopum* (Victor 2.45) is probably a scribal error for Secundianus Mimianensis (Byzacena 72), *Notitia* (66), who is also marked down as in exile. See *Schwarze Entwicklung der afrikanische Kirche* 164 and Courtois *Victor de Vita* 50 n.199. For *metallo* - Dominus Moxoritanus (Numidia 76).

20) Byzacena 43-4, *Notitia* (66).

21) Victor 3.17-20 (44-5).

- 22) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 48 n.190; Victor 3.45 (51).
- 23) *Laterculus Regum Vandalorum* (Augiensis) 9, MGH a.a.13 459.
- 24) That Victor's detailed account after the events (often centred on Carthage) followed from personal experience and continued residence in Carthage seems clear from Victor 3.49 (52).
- 25) Those who *perierunt* are contrasted with those who *permanserunt*. It was the latter who were considered to have been exiled. *Notitia* (71).
- 26) Victor 3.16 (44). Schepens 'A propos du sigle <prbt>' 147-8. Cf. Courtois *Victor de Vita* 92 n.10.
- 27) Victor 2.52 (25).
- 28) Courtois *Victor de Vita* 97 n.38-41, Courtois 186 n.8.
- 29) *Notitia* (68-70).
- 30) Victor 2.28 (19) mentions the handing over of the Catholic clergy to the Moors in the presence of Vandal counts at Sicca and Lares. Victor 2.32 (20) shows the continued presence of the Vandals as the Moors led the clergy through Numidia.
- 31) See e.g. G. Camps 'Rex gentium Maurorum et Romanorum: Recherches sur les royaumes de Maurétanie des VI^e et VII^e siècles' *AntAfr* 20 (1984) 183-218.
- 32) Victor 3.29-30 (47-8).
- 33) See Courtois 177-80 esp. 180 and Appendix 2:68-9, 375. For dating by Vandal regnal dates see Duval 'L'année du règne vandale' 80-5.
- 34) Procopius *Wars* 3.8.5 (74).
- 35) See e.g. Camps 'Les royaumes de Maurétanie' 198-9. Courtois Appendix 2:132, 382.
- 36) See J. Carcopino 'Un «empereur» maure inconnu d'après une inscription latine récemment découverte dans l'Aurès' *REA* 46 (1944) 94-

120, supported by Camps 'Les royaumes de Maurétanie' 199. Cf. Courtois 337-9 who considers he was *dux* from 429 and *imperator* from 455. P-A. Février 'Masuna et Masties' *AntAfr* 133-47 considers that Masties was merely a *tribunus* while P. Morizot 'Pour une nouvelle lecture de l'*elogium* de Masties' *AntAfr* 25 (1989) 263-84 dates Masties to the end of the Vandal period.

37) *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m.1.1 63-6.

38) *Mauretania Caesariensis* 43 *Notitia* (69).

39) Victor 2.44 (23).

40) Courtois Victor de Vita 99-100; Courtois 177.

41) See P-A. Février 'Aux origines du christianisme en Maurétanie Césarienne' *MEFRA* 98 (1986) 801-3 and F.M.B. Torreira 'La Iglesia norteafricana y el problema de la cristianización de los pueblos indígenas en la época vándala' in *L'Africa Romana 7 Atti del VII convegno di studi*, Sassari 15-17 Dicembre 1989 (Sassari, 1990) 387-90.

42) Pope Leo I *Ep.* 12.10, PL 54 654-5.

43) Lancel *Actes* 1 118-20; *Gesta* 1.127.

44) Lancel *Actes* 1 120 n.1.

45) Maier 96-242 *passim*, e.g. *Abissensis*, *Buzensis*.

46) O. Perler *Les voyages de saint Augustin* (Paris, 1969) 45-56.

47) Victor 2.53 (25).

48) Victor 3.16 (44).

49) E.g. CCSL 149 202-3.

50) Courtois Victor de Vita 100. We find in the Byzacena list the repetition of Adelfius Mactaritanus (25 and 50). In the Numidia list the toponym *Formensis* is repeated (104 and 108).

51) For the position of Byzacena in the Vandal kingdom see Courtois 182-3.

52) Victor 1.23 (6) *Crescentem metropolitanum Aquitanae civitatis, qui centum viginti praeerat episcopis*. Courtois believed it most likely that he was primate of Byzacena (*metropolitanus* is a very rare way to refer to this office), *Victor de Vita* 49 n.195, 94 and Courtois 111 n.1. All the bishops listed beside him were from Byzacena except perhaps Habetdeus Teudalensis.

53) For the number, VF 18.3 (39). That these were all from Byzacena seems clear from the fact that Fulgentius spoke on their behalf; and exactly the same is said of the *pars maxima concilii Byzaceni* in VF 18.7 (91) (this *pars maxima* would also support the idea that the size of the *concilium Byzacenum* was about one hundred strong). That those elected en masse in 502 were only from Byzacena can be discerned from VF 13.15 (71) where we are also told that nearly all of the sees were filled up.

54) $(20 + 20) + 2 \times 117 = 58\%$. As been stated in n.15, twenty years is probably on the high side for an average episcopate so that the number is, if anything, on the small side. *Cunctos... exilio mancipandos* (VF 13.16 (71)) would seem to refer to the *novis sacerdotibus* of VF 13.15 (71) and not also to the other remaining bishops, who might have been involved in the ordinations (cf. VF 13.10 (69)). This would seem to be confirmed from the *pars maxima* (VF 18.7 (91), see n.53) and by the fact that in the next sentence, we are told of the specific fate of the chief ordinator, the primate Victor, who was led to Carthage, and was the first into exile. It had been envisaged by the *sacra turba pontificum qui remanserat* that it would be the newly-elected bishops, if anyone, who would suffer, VF 13.10 (69). There is no suggestion that other

(perhaps similarly prohibited) episcopal elections may have taken place before this. Bonifatius, primate of Byzacena in 517, according to a letter produced by the abbot Peter at the Council of Carthage 525, CCSL 149 281, could be any one of the four Bonifatii named in the *Notitia* (66-8) or could conceivably have been writing the letter from exile, cf. VF 18.8 (91-3). Liberatus, who was primate between 523 and 525 was probably ordained after the compilation of the *Notitia* since the only two Liberati named had the *prbt* notation next to them (1 and 86); Mandouze 638-9. It is certainly not inconceivable that all the bishops in the *Notitia* had died since its compilation in c.480.

55) Before - *Gurgaitanus, Octabensis* (?), Tharasa . After - Acholla, Autenti, *Decorianensis, Maximianensis, Quaestorianensis, Thapsus, Uppenna, Valentinianensis*. Before and after - *Sullectum*.

56) Lancel *Actes* 1 134-43, esp. 143.

56a) S.Lancel 'Originalité de la province ecclésiastique de Byzacène aux I^{ve} et VI^e siècles' *CT* 12 (1964) 144. Also *Actes* 1 136, 183-5.

57) Leo *Ep.* 12.10, PL 54 654-5.

57a) *Notitia* (65-6). Maier *passim*. Before - Gadiaufala, Tharasa (?). After - *Naratcatensis, Sila, Vicus Pacatensis, Tipasa* (?).

58) E.g. Victor 1.22-3 (6).

59) Maier *passim*. Victor (1.29 (8)) says that 'it came about that, after the death of the bishop of Carthage [c.457] they [the Vandals] forbade the ordination of bishops for Zeugitana and Proconsularis. There used to be 164 of them, but gradually this number had diminished, and now they seem to be just three...'. In wishing to make his point, Victor may have been stretching the truth in more than one direction. The number of 164 bishops of Proconsularis could possibly be true for the

period around 411, Victor does not say exactly when he is referring to in relation to this. Likewise the number of only three remaining conflicts with the information the *Notitia* gives us. Here fifty-four bishops are listed for this province. The three Victor mentions are included (Vincentius of Zigua (41), Paulus of Sinnari (3) and Quintianus, if he is bishop of Urusi (20)). The rest of the Proconsularis list would not appear to be bogus. Eugenius of Carthage is given as in exile in Tamalleni (n.22). Bishop Reparatus of Puppiana (12), known from other sources is mentioned as is bishop Succonius. Victor should also have mentioned Felix Abbiritanus (2) as still surviving as he is mentioned in Victor 2.26 (19). The great discrepancy between the number of bishops Victor mentions as surviving and the number in the *Notitia* could be explained if Victor was actually referring to the number of bishops ordained before 457 (his phrasing lends itself to this interpretation) and their number had since been augmented by new ordinations. The most likely time for these new ordinations would be at the beginning of Huneric's reign when new ordinations probably took place in other provinces; see Courtois 291 n.1.

60) Before - Beneventum. After - Aradi, Missua, Siminia, Thimida, Tonnena. Before and after - Tatiae Montana, Puppi.

61) Of these fourteen sees, three can be localised, Missua (Sidi Daoud) was an important port town on cap Bon, Siminia was a small town nearby, Thimida lies in the central plains area near the middle Medjerda.

62) VF 7.13 (43), 6.1 (35).

63) See n.62.

64) Victor 1.29 (8).

65) Lancel *Actes* 1 144. Maier *passim*.

CHAPTER 7

Fulgentius the bishop and churchleader: insights into the African Catholic Church in the later Vandal period

This chapter will consider various remaining aspects of the Catholic Church in the later Vandal period. The central source is the *Vita Fulgentii*, to which the first section will be devoted. A second section will then consider the Church in the province of Byzacena. A third section will investigate Fulgentius as a churchleader, with special reference to the nature and effect of Fulgentius' eloquence, drawing on the *Vita Fulgentii* and Fulgentius' own writings. We shall see finally, how this eloquence worked in action when Fulgentius was called to debate with the Vandal king Thrasamund.

a) The *Vita Fulgentii*

The *Vita Sancti Fulgentii* (VF) is the only source which provides anything like a continuous historical narrative for the late Vandal period. However, unlike Victor's *Historia*, it does not even purport to be a general history of the persecution. It is a biographical, or rather hagiographical work describing the life of Fulgentius,¹ who became bishop of Ruspe, on the east coast of Byzacena, and who was probably born in 462 and died in 527.² The author has selected episodes from the life of his hero which illustrate stages in the growth of the holiness of his life. This portrayal of Fulgentius shows him as an African 'Man

for All Seasons'. He was a bishop² and defender of the faith as a theologian³ (like Cyprian and Augustine) whilst simultaneously being a monk⁴ (like Augustine) and a martyr or, at least a confessor (Cyprian had been both).⁵ This last quality was important for the credibility of an African Catholic holy man living under the Arian Vandals and a mark of the specific conditions of that region and time.⁶ An account of an African Catholic holy man like Fulgentius will also inform us incidentally about various events and conditions within the Catholic Church as a context to his life. Finally, such an account can also tell us about how at least one individual or group within that Church perceived their leader and the ideals which he represented.

The author of the *Vita Fulgentii* was probably Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage (d. 546/7).⁷ He was a self-professed *discipulus*⁸ and *sectator*⁹ of Fulgentius and a close friend of the dedicatee, Felicianus,¹⁰ who was in exile with Fulgentius¹¹ and was his successor as bishop of Ruspe.¹² Ferrandus had other friends in common with Fulgentius.¹³ The author of the *Vita* was certainly in exile in Sardinia with Fulgentius and Felicianus¹⁴ and was familiar with many aspects of Fulgentius' life.¹⁵ Ferrandus seems to have succeeded Fulgentius as the chief theologian of the African Church for a while, fielding questions from Fulgentius' former correspondents after his death¹⁶ and from others in Rome and Constantinople.¹⁷ Though the *Vita* is anonymous, we know that Ferrandus was in other situations concerned to remain anonymous.¹⁸ Though the author may not necessarily be known from another surviving source, of all the writers of whom we know from this generation, Ferrandus is by far the most likely, and the only one we know to have

considered the writing of a *Vita Fulgentii*.¹⁹ However, erring on the side of caution, I shall refer henceforth only to 'the author of the *Vita*'.

The author of the *Vita* makes explicit in his Preface his motives in writing the work. His main theme is that a good and holy life is a necessary complement to wholesome doctrine for a *doctor ecclesiae catholicae*.²⁰ The author tells us that Fulgentius' books were read by all,²¹ attesting to their contemporary popularity known from elsewhere, particularly in Africa.²² However, the author was concerned that the goodness of Fulgentius' life, the necessary concomitant of wholesome doctrine, might not be known after the present generation or by those abroad who only knew him through his works.²³ He laments that 'the African peoples have been deprived of the solace of such a man'²⁴ particularly since 'we now lack a *doctor* of his ilk'.²⁵ The *Vita* was written probably some time between 533²⁶ and 535,²⁷ at the beginning of a new age, at the time of or just after the Byzantine reconquest of Africa, when the African Catholic Church was very much in need of leadership and of being reminded of its past. Fulgentius was the greatest paragon of the stalwart resistance of the Catholic Church in its adversity (or so he is presented in the *Vita*). As well as representing the role which monasticism appears to have played in the Vandal period, Fulgentius represented the solidarity of the Catholic Church as the author wished to see it.

However, one of the unavoidable impressions of the *Vita* is that Fulgentius was exceptional and that his leadership was in fact essential

- and we find some support for this in other sources.²⁸ To the author of the *Vita*, Fulgentius was the *Africanæ Ecclesiæ doctor prædestinatus*, the *catholicæ ecclesiæ singularis magister et doctor*, the *vir necessarius*, who did not live for himself but for others.²⁹ Though such statements were common in hagiography, we need not doubt that they were meant sincerely by the author. Since there was no one of Fulgentius' calibre to take over, his deeds and example should be made known, as they were in danger of fading from memory. The incorporation of Africa within the Byzantine Empire as well as the spread of Fulgentius' writings abroad may have generated the author's concern that people *in transmarinibus partibus* should also know about Fulgentius.³⁰ It would also be understandable that the author would wish to show the new conquerors the mettle of the recent African Church in the person of its greatest leader. Even by the time of writing, African ecclesiastics may have been given reason to fear the future compromising effects of inclusion in the Empire.³¹

The author of the *Vita*, then, wished Fulgentius' memory to be revered and perpetuated and his example emulated.³² The author, like Ferrandus in his writings, was thus acting as a bridge between Fulgentius' generation and the succeeding one, passing on the example of Fulgentius and his colleagues to those new bishops who would have to face a new challenge to the African Church in the form of the Three Chapters dispute.

The author of the *Vita* gives us an important key to Fulgentius' future greatness when he tells us about his background and upbringing.

Fulgentius' grandfather had been a Carthaginian senator, Gordianus, who had been forced to flee to Italy on Gaiseric's arrival in Carthage.³³ Fulgentius' father and uncle returned some years later to try and claim their inheritance. On arriving in Carthage, they found their house taken over by Arian priests, but the king deigned to give them back their estate in the region of Thelepte, in south-west Byzacena³⁴ - an interesting reflection on the difference in conditions between Proconsularis and the palatine provinces. It was here that Fulgentius was born.³⁵

Fulgentius' mother taught him Greek literature and language at home before he was even allowed to learn Latin letters. The author attests to his ability to speak Greek well later.³⁶ Fulgentius then learnt Latin literature and grammar, supposedly nearby, suggesting that this facility was still available locally.³⁷ With the premature death of his father, Fulgentius was thrust early into the responsibilities of estate management.³⁸ Since he was *sublimioribus potestatibus carissimus*, he was made a procurator.³⁹ The author is noticeably silent about the identity of the *potestates*, but they must have been officials of the Vandal king's court, or even the king himself. In the palatine provinces, where Vandal authority does not appear to have been so direct,⁴⁰ it would be useful to the king to have such noble Roman provincials as loyal and local power brokers. Fulgentius' office appears to have been local, and entailed collecting taxes.⁴¹

However, Fulgentius increasingly turned to an ascetic lifestyle and then entered the monastery of bishop Faustus nearby.⁴² Though we

need not doubt the sincerity of his conversion, the heavy penalties that Huneric laid upon Catholic officials may have helped to precipitate Fulgentius' change of direction and forced him to decide to whom his loyalties belonged.⁴³

It is only possible here to draw the sketchiest picture of monasticism in Fulgentius' time and his involvement in it. The impression the sources give are that monasticism was thriving in Byzacena at this time.⁴⁴ The Vandals appear to have dealt less stringently with Catholic monks than with clergy.⁴⁵ It is noticeable that the only time when Fulgentius was physically abused as a monk was when an Arian priest considered that he had been proselytising and was covering up his priestly office in the garb of a monk.⁴⁶ Monasteries then might act as a safe place for those who wanted to live a religious life but avoid the dangers that clerical life entailed under the Vandals.⁴⁷ With many bishops in Byzacena in exile in the periods 484 to 494 and 502 to 523, monasteries might be set up without interference from episcopal authority and might seek the support of a chosen bishop, not necessarily the one in whose diocese they lay.⁴⁸ Indeed, perhaps to escape from the difficulties of clerical life, clerics themselves might set up monasteries.⁴⁹ We know from the Council of Carthage in 525 that some bishops in Byzacena including the primate Liberatus wished to clamp down upon the freedom from episcopal control which monasteries had clearly been enjoying up till then.⁵⁰ However, Bonifatius, bishop of Carthage and the Council held at Carthage were concerned to protect this freedom.⁵¹

Fulgentius, was concerned that his own monastery in Ruspe should enjoy freedom from his own and his successor's episcopal control.⁵² Fulgentius clearly appreciated the value of the monastic life. It had allowed him to pursue religious learning and to teach what he had learned and also to pursue ascetic practices.⁵³ It also allowed him to travel unhindered in pursuit of living a more ascetic lifestyle, not only within Africa, but also to Sicily and Rome.⁵⁴

Fulgentius' reputation for asceticism and holiness grew and he was unable to resist election as a bishop.⁵⁵ As bishop of Ruspe on the coast of Byzacena, Fulgentius set up a monastery, gathering around him monks who had joined him in his past foundations throughout Byzacena and making his friend Felix the abbot.⁵⁶ Fulgentius had known other bishops who were interested in the monastic life, in Africa, Sicily and Sardinia.⁵⁷ He must also have known of the episcopal foundations founded by Augustine and his followers who became monk-bishops. Fulgentius could not quite achieve this kind of arrangement even after 523, when king Hilderic returned to the Catholic Church freedom to conduct its own affairs.⁵⁸ He did however, manage to ordain nearly all new clerics in his diocese from amongst his monks and if he could not get his clergy to live a common life, he made sure they lived a stricter lifestyle.⁵⁹

According to the *Vita*, Fulgentius did not always have a high opinion of the *mos clericorum*, at least that of his contemporaries,⁶⁰ though he did hold clerical office itself in high esteem.⁶¹ The *Vita* views Fulgentius as a man who had effectively wedded together the monastic and clerical lives. He represented all that was best in these

two forms of Christian living as the *magister utriusque professionis*.⁶² Episcopal office (as abbatial office had done)⁶³ kept him away from the kind of uncompromisingly ascetic lifestyle to which he had always tended by personal choice,⁶⁴ so he always made sure he never lived without fellow-monks, 'so that, having taken up the burden of ruling over clerics, he should not lose the consolation of monks'.⁶⁵ Fulgentius' ascetic monastic lifestyle and education constituted an essential well-spring from which he drew the spiritual strength and religious learning which allowed him to act so effectively as a churchleader. Before considering Fulgentius' activities in this area, it is helpful to provide a background by investigating the history of the Church in Fulgentius' home province of Byzacena.

b) The Church in Byzacena

Since the *Vita* informs us mostly about the Church in Byzacena, it is useful to look more closely into the history of the Church in this province. The civil *provincia Byzacena* was formed from the southern extension of the province of Proconsularis known as Byzacium in AD 297.⁶⁶ Even before this, Christianity was established in this region. Twenty of the eighty-five bishops at the Council of Carthage in 256 came from here.⁶⁷ However, the ecclesiastical province of Byzacena (which covered more or less the same area as the civil province) is not known to have existed independently until 348.⁶⁸ The area lacked the natural or ethnic unity of other provinces, such as Proconsularis and Numidia. It comprised not only the Sahel coastline and its prosperous hinterland, along with the plains around Kairouan, which made up the original Byzacium, but also the high steppes around Maktar, the eastward extension of the Dorsal mountains around Thelepte and the pre-desert regions around Chott-el-Djerid.⁶⁹ The Church in Byzacena does not seem to have experienced the stimuli that led to the development of the Church in other provinces, and Lancel has given reasons to believe that the Diocletianic persecution does not seem to have affected it greatly.⁷⁰ Donatism here seems to have been 'less a local product than a product of importation' and was most prevalent here in the milder version adhered to by the Maximianists.⁷¹

However, despite these inauspicious beginnings, the Catholic Church in Byzacena, as represented by the bishops of the province, had begun to assert its corporate identity by the end of the fourth century.

This is borne out by what happened at the Council of Carthage in August 397. The Byzacenian delegates turned up at the Council two weeks too early. They told Aurelius, bishop of Carthage, that they could not wait until the other bishops came, and were concerned not to return to their sees without achieving something. So with Aurelius, the Byzacenian bishops compiled an epitome of the canons of the Council of Hippo of 393.⁷² The *Breviarium Hipponense*, a master-piece of African canonical legislation, owes its existence to these bishops. When the Byzacenian bishops had left at the appointed date (August 28th, 397) and the other bishops had gathered, the canons were ratified and made binding on the whole African Church.⁷³ This achievement may well have been a source of pride to succeeding Byzacenian bishops, since these canons proved to be central to future canon collections.

It has been suggested that the Byzacenian bishops arrived and left early deliberately, in order to avoid a clash with the other bishops concerning the order of precedence (and therefore the seating at the Council) amongst the bishops.⁷⁴ The ordering of the provinces according to the antiquity of their creation - Proconsularis, Numidia, Byzacena, Mauretania Sitifensis, Mauretania Caesariensis, Tripolitania - had not become such a dominant factor in determining the order of precedence of bishops when all provinces were gathered together in a general council at this time as Bonifatius, bishop of Carthage at the Council of Carthage in 525, would have us think.⁷⁵

Probably as the result of a dispute over claims to the primateship in Numidia,⁷⁶ it was emphasised at the general African

council of Milev in 402 that strict observance of the order of seniority should be maintained in order to avoid such disputes.⁷⁷ All new bishops would be given a document recording the date of their ordination.⁷⁸ Whether this meant that the same order of seniority of bishops, taking all provinces together, should be maintained at a general council is not certain, since we do not have the subscription list for this council. However, that it was intended is suggested by the fact that the Catholic subscriptions at the Council of Carthage of 411 were ordered in this way rather than according to the order of provinces.⁷⁹

However, another possible interpretation of the rule of seniority was that it should be maintained within each provincial *matricula* or list, with each provincial list being arranged in the order of seniority of province. This is suggested by what remains of the subscriptions at the Council of Carthage of 419.⁸⁰ It is also possible that the initial Catholic subscriptions on the eve of the Council of Carthage of 411 were ordered province by province.⁸¹ In reality in Aurelius' time there appears to have been some ambiguity as to the correct protocol in this matter, though the order adopted at the Council of 419, the latest for which we have evidence, might suggest that the provincial order had become the dominant factor by Aurelius' last years.

Though Bonifatius of Carthage at the time of the Council of Carthage of 525 put a particular emphasis on provincial order, claiming that he was drawing on earlier conciliar definitions, he actually supported his authority merely with an excerpt referring to legates according to the order of their provinces; Proconsularis, Numidia,

Byzacena.⁸² However, for every such mention of the provinces in the 'correct order', there is an equal number of references made in different orders.⁸³ This would suggest that there was not the strict regard for provincial order that Bonifatius claimed. The concept itself may have crystallised during the Vandal period in Carthage. It is this provincial seniority which determines the order in the *Notitia*,⁸⁴ though the order was inevitably determined by its method of compilation; this same order is maintained in the subscriptions at the end of the *Liber Fidei Catholicae*, both documents in whose drafting Eugenius of Carthage was probably involved.⁸⁵ Clearly an order of precedence where seniority of all bishops together rather than simply within the provincial order was preferable to the Byzacenian bishops, since it gave a sense of equality between the provinces more acceptable to a province like Byzacena which lay in third position and was no doubt mindful of having once been a part of Proconsularis. Indeed, it is noticeable that the lists sometimes put Byzacena in second place. The principle of episcopal seniority, on the other hand, would eliminate any such conflict or uncertainty over provincial order.

If a concern over seniority on the part of the Byzacenian bishops can only be hypothesised in the case of the Council of Hippo in 397, there is at least some circumstantial evidence that such a concern may have influenced the events surrounding the Council of Carthage in 525. At this Council, Bonifatius, bishop of Carthage, made several references to the fact that certain bishops wished to claim precedence for themselves where it was not owed to them, in contravention of the

canon of the Council of Milev.⁸⁶ Such bishops were claiming an 'indiscrete equality'.⁸⁷

Just before the recitation of the Nicaean Creed which opened the conciliar deliberations and, therefore in an important place and before any of the other canons of past councils were cited, Bonifatius stated that it was clear from 'the canons' that Proconsularis came before Numidia, and that Numidia came before Byzacena and the other provinces.⁸⁸ Bonifatius actually based himself on a deliberation specific to the Council of Carthage of 418, rather than on any legally-binding law to do with the provincial order. The list of provinces he cites himself stops, significantly, at Byzacena whereas the fuller version preserved in *Registri Ecclesiae Carthaginiensis Excerpta* mentions also Mauretania Sitifensis and Tripolitania. It is clear then, which part of the list Bonifatius was concerned about.⁸⁹ The language of the Council of 525 is very oblique and it is only by inference that we can discern that it is the bishops of Byzacena, led by their primate Liberatus, who are considered to be the guilty party who 'put themselves before those who were prior to them'.⁹⁰ This theme was emphasised at the Council itself, and it is significant that the Byzacenian bishops, almost to a man, boycotted the Council.

If the bishops of Byzacena had demanded that they should be seated according to seniority and not according to provincial order, the bishop of Carthage, defending the order he thought correct (and which would give greater precedence and prestige to the bishops of Proconsularis, whose mother see was Carthage), would claim that they

were putting themselves before their elders and priors and were claiming an 'indiscrete equality'. He would also seek the support of other provinces, particularly Numidia, which would also gain from provincial seniority; this indeed, he did.⁹¹ This concern for precedence and prestige may possibly also help to explain the unusual but coordinated behaviour of the Byzacenian bishops in 397, which also allowed them to play an important part in the compilation of African canon law.

The number of Catholic bishops in Byzacena may have grown in the years leading up to the Council of Carthage in 411, particularly given the decline of the Maximianists.⁹² It must have grown even more with the absorption of the Donatist congregations after 411.⁹³ Thanks mainly to Ferrandus' *Breviatio Canonum*, we know of several Byzacenian provincial councils of the second decade of the fifth century.⁹⁴ The ecclesiastical province had clearly gone some way to defining its own characteristics within the general framework of the African Church. As well as repeating rulings of the general African councils and directives of the bishop of Rome,⁹⁵ the bishops of the province of Byzacena supplemented them with laws of its own. For instance the *concilium Naradiense*, ruled that 'the sacraments should be performed universally throughout Byzacium'.⁹⁶

As we have seen, the Church in Byzacena does not seem to have suffered from Arian persecution to the degree experienced by the province of Proconsularis. From what can be gleaned from the *Notitia*, it seems that the number of bishoprics was maintained from the early fifth century until around 480 (though the number may have fallen off in the

intervening period).⁹⁷ It has been suggested that there were several new bishoprics founded on landed estates.

As Arian persecution grew in Huneric's reign, several Byzacenian bishops proved their mettle by standing up for their faith. Cyprianus of Unizibiri supported and joined the exiled clergy from Proconsularis.⁹⁸ Praesidius of Sufetula was beaten and exiled.⁹⁹ Vindemialis of Capsa, according to Gregory of Tours, was killed for his faith.¹⁰⁰ Victor tells us that Laetus of Nepta was imprisoned and burned.¹⁰¹ The mass exile of bishops in 484 must have struck a serious blow to the organisation and discipline of the Church in Byzacena as elsewhere, particularly considering its duration. However, for those exiled only outside their diocese, life was perhaps not so difficult, as the case of bishop Faustus suggests.¹⁰² However, even while in exile, a bishop like Faustus might suffer persecution and have to leave his original retreat.¹⁰³ Some bishops from Byzacena preferred to flee from Africa.¹⁰⁴ Whether new elections of bishops took place with the recall of bishops by Gunthamund in 494 is unclear, though the large number of new elections in 502 argues against this.¹⁰⁵ Thrasamund, his successor (496-523), certainly prohibited new elections some time before 502, though this did not prevent the bishops in Byzacena from holding elections as the *Vita* tells us.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Thrasamund may have begun persecuting Catholics from early in his reign.¹⁰⁷

The degree of coordination and organisation that must have been required of the remaining bishops to make possible the elections and ordinations of new bishops to vacant sees in Byzacena in 502 suggests

that there was an impressive degree of cohesion within the *concilium Byzacenum*, despite its depleted number.¹⁰⁸ The term *concilium Byzacenum* is often used by the author of the *Vita* to denote the collegiality of the bishops of Byzacena.¹⁰⁹ It is also to be found in the records of the Council of Carthage of 525 (where we also hear of the *concilium Numidiae*).¹¹⁰ The frequent use of this term emphasises the permanence of the collectivity of the bishops of the province and its independent identity.¹¹¹

The *Vita* can provide us with a framework for our investigation of the Byzacenian Church and of Fulgentius in particular. Fulgentius is, of course, the focus of the author's attention and the information that the author has chosen to give reflects well upon his hero. But the *Vita* also gives us much incidental information on the Byzacenian Church as a context for Fulgentius' saintly exploits which is usually more descriptive than tendentious.

Fulgentius was elected to several bishoprics at one time when new ordinations were planned in contravention of the royal command.¹¹² That Fulgentius' reputation could have spread and had such an influence upon popular choice seems to demonstrate the importance of oral communication in influencing events.¹¹³ The spread of the *fama* or *notitia* of a churchman might help him to galvanise his coreligionists,¹¹⁴ but it could also work in the other direction and bring persecution upon the subject.¹¹⁵ It was through pro-Vandal channels of intelligence that the king heard of the episcopal elections and exiled the new bishops.¹¹⁶

In reporting the reasons for the new elections, the author of the *Vita* suggests that the surviving bishops felt that it would be better to have a bishop who might be exiled or martyred than none at all, since in this way 'they would fulfil their ministry more easily and provide solace to their own people in their tribulations'.¹¹⁷ There was psychological value in having a bishop, even if he was in exile. This seems to be confirmed by the apparently great rush to elect clerics as bishops 'so that no one should be seen to be slow or last'.¹¹⁸ This supports the impression that much prestige hung upon the ranking of a bishop and his see in the order of seniority. The sooner a bishop was elected, the higher up he would be in the *matricula concilii*.¹¹⁹ That the perceived holiness of a bishop might reflect well upon his town in which he was bishop is apparent from the descriptions of Ruspe in the *Vita*.¹²⁰ A bishop adorned his town.¹²¹

Fulgentius, thinking he had avoided the spate of elections through flight, emerged from hiding but was nevertheless elected, slightly later than the other bishops, to the see of Ruspe.¹²² The town had rejected the 'proud and ambitious' deacon Felix.¹²³ Such competition for the see suggests, particularly considering the danger of persecution, that bishoprics were worth controlling and were not always an unwanted burden. Felix's brother, 'a friend of the procurator, tried to exercise his ambition through secular power'.¹²⁴ This gives the impression that despite the king's prohibition of new elections, it was worth the risk to the procurator to use his authority in order to try to help a friend's brother to gain the office of bishop. That there was such a risk involved is suggested by the fact that the procurator had

been reduced to penury within a year.¹²⁵ The office of bishop in Byzacena then, might still be expected to bring with it considerable authority both ecclesiastical and social, and perhaps also control of wealth worth competing for. Fulgentius as a bishop, before he was exiled, could find many landowners willing to provide him with the kind of land he needed for a monastery.¹²⁶

Though Fulgentius could not attract many people to his first monastic-style house in Cagliari in southern Sardinia where he was exiled soon after his ordination, his opinion on various ecclesiastical matters was eagerly sought.¹²⁷ As the *Vita* tells us, though Fulgentius sat last amongst the over sixty Byzacenian bishops in exile in Sardinia because he was the most recently ordained, 'the primate and all who followed the primate desired to hear and act upon his opinion, though he allowed suitable deference to his elders'.¹²⁸ The *Vita* continues, 'whenever the bishops were questioned in letters from abroad about faith or about various questions, it was imposed on him by all to answer for them all'.¹²⁹ This is borne out by the statement we find in the letter of the bishops who had been in exile in Sardinia which precedes Fulgentius' *De Veritate Praedestinationis et Gratiae*, written to answer the queries of certain Scythian monks on this subject. It reads as follows: 'We preferred to respond to your questions briefly with a communal reply. One of us to whom the Lord deigned to give the benefit of correct speech [*rectus sermo*] for his servants has replied to all those things...in three books'.¹³⁰ These were the three books of Fulgentius' *De Veritate Praedestinationis*.¹³¹ This shows that there was substance to the panegyrical claims of the *Vita* stated above.

The *Vita* then goes on to say that more than sixty bishops, or the *pars maxima concilii Byzacenti*, 'thrived' on Fulgentius' speech.¹²² If any of the bishops wished to correct or advise his absent people he would seek the aid of Fulgentius, whose eloquence would induce the recalcitrant or excommunicated parishioner or cleric to cross the sea and seek forgiveness.¹²³ This was a grand claim to make on the behalf of Fulgentius' eloquence, yet as we have seen demonstrated before, he probably did write on behalf of other bishops and it is not unlikely that some penitents did sail to Sardinia to settle affairs and seek satisfaction from their bishop.

The attempt to fulfil episcopal duties from exile by means of letters is a remarkable one. Clearly it was a difficult task and so would require all the eloquence that could be mustered. Unfortunately none of these letters survives (the letter of Bonifatius of Gratiana to the female monastery of Bavaglia might conceivably have been one - it was a grant of privilege).¹²⁴ Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, exiled in the 350s, managed to maintain communion with his church through his own priests.¹²⁵ Bishop Cyprian of Carthage had also tried to continue to exercise his pastoral and disciplinary duties when in exile not so far from his diocese in Curubis in 249/50,¹²⁶ though he could not prevent the challenge to his authority by lay confessors who were issuing *libelli* of forgiveness to the lapsed during the Decian persecutions.¹²⁷ It could only have been with difficulty, then, that the exiled bishops in Sardinia could have made their authority felt in their dioceses.

What is perhaps most significant about this passage is that the exiled bishops of Byzacena continued to act as a group and sought to help one another. Interested parties wrote to them collectively to seek their opinion as well as to Fulgentius individually. The bishops were in touch with Milan and Rome and later with the Scythian monks in Constantinople. Ennodius, deacon of Milan at the time (later bishop of Pavia) appears to have written on behalf of Pope Symmachus (498-514) a letter lending the African bishops his moral support and consolation, and passing on the blessings of the Milanese saints Nazarius and Romanus as they had requested.¹³⁸ Pope Symmachus, himself a Sardinian, sent food and clothes to exiles in both Sardinia and Africa itself.¹³⁹ Victor of Tonnena informs us that 120 bishops were sent into exile in Sardinia, whereas the *Vita* had stated there were sixty or more Byzacenian bishops.¹⁴⁰ We know that Eugenius, bishop of Carthage was sent into exile some time before 505 when he died,¹⁴¹ his final place of exile being Albi in south-west Gaul.¹⁴² This suggests that there were successive waves of exile of bishops initiated by Thrasamund, not only to Sardinia but also within Africa itself and elsewhere beyond the Vandal domains.¹⁴³ However, within Sardinia the *Vita* gives the impression that the Byzacenian bishops remained a distinct group.¹⁴⁴

The *Vita* is, of course, a work in praise of Fulgentius, and so Fulgentius is naturally made to seem outstanding in comparison with the other bishops who are grouped together as the grateful recipients of his eloquence. However, the likelihood that this bears some relation to reality is supported by the extract from the letter of the bishops above. Fulgentius was clearly exceptional. Other independent sources

praise his eloquence,¹⁴⁵ and the fact that so many of his works survive, whereas there are virtually none from known African contemporaries, helps to corroborate this picture of a man standing out from his fellows.¹⁴⁶

While the order of seniority might serve as a useful pillar of ecclesiastical discipline, in practice it clearly had to cede at times to the authority that God-given talents gave to certain individuals, as the bishops seem to have recognised.¹⁴⁷ We know of a number of cases where the established order gave way to individual ability. In Burgundy, Bishop Avitus of Vienne was deferred to as the advocate for the Catholics when arguing for that profession against the Arian creed before the Arian king Gundobad, even though 'he was not senior either in dignity or in age'.¹⁴⁸ Augustine had been invited to preach to the Council of Hippo in 393, though he was still a priest.¹⁴⁹ Nearer to home still, Ferrandus, though only a deacon, was consulted on important questions of theology and Church discipline by Catholics clerics and laymen from all round the Mediterranean.¹⁵⁰ Though he referred his correspondents to his superiors and to those of priestly status who had the *auctoritas docendi*,¹⁵¹ Ferrandus did not desist from answering.¹⁵²

As with the case of Ferrandus, Fulgentius' charismatic authority was considered to outweigh the hierarchical authority of other bishops. In his *De Veritate Praedestinationis et Gratiae*, he had been at pains to point out that those holding offices in this world should not be equated with those blessed with the grace of God.¹⁵³ However, he clearly also had respect for the hierarchy of the Church and was keen to have his

writings and opinions affirmed by other bishops and attributed to them collectively. He was aware of the fallibility of the teaching of an individual writer,¹⁵⁴ as was Ferrandus,¹⁵⁵ and made a point of subjecting himself in official matters to the authority of the council of bishops as a whole, whose authority was always greater than that of the individual.¹⁵⁶ A joint conciliar decision was considered to be an essential sign of divinely revealed truth.¹⁵⁷ This belief was to be one of the mainstays of the African Church's opposition to alterations made by the Emperor Justinian and affirmed by Pope Vigilius to promulgations of the Council of Chalcedon.¹⁵⁸

In the meantime, the collegiality of the exiled bishops provided them with solidarity while Fulgentius' wisdom and eloquence appear to have helped to provide them with a unifying voice. The group of monks known as the Scythian monks, when in Rome in 519/20, turned to these African bishops in exile for their valued opinion on the Theopaschite formula - 'one member of the Trinity suffered', an attempt at a compromise which would please both the supporters of Chalcedon and the Monophysites.¹⁵⁹ A few years later these monks requested the opinion of the exiled African bishops on the matter of predestination and grace.¹⁶⁰ Such requests, as well as Fulgentius' answers, must have boosted the bishops' prestige and their reputation throughout the Mediterranean.

We cannot deny that Fulgentius' aristocratic background contributed towards his authority amongst the bishops. Fulgentius' reputation as a *doctor Africanæ ecclesiæ* and the deference of the

other bishops is understandable, if, as the sparse evidence we have suggests, African bishops were often not of a particularly high social or educational status.¹⁶¹ The signs of Fulgentius' noble upbringing were still evident. In terms of wealth, even after thirty years of being a monk, Fulgentius could still build a monastery near Cagliari for forty monks from his own funds.¹⁶² It is evident to us, as it must have been to contemporaries, that Fulgentius could strike up friendships and communicate with members of the highest ranking senatorial families such as the Anicii and Decii and speak to them as their spiritual father, not fearing to rebuke and admonish them if necessary.¹⁶³ Fulgentius must have been greatly assisted by the fact that he was a member of the illustrious Gordiani family, famed in Africa and Italy.¹⁶⁴ Fulgentius had in common with his Roman aristocratic correspondents noble blood, but also a predilection for asceticism, which they practised privately in their own houses.¹⁶⁵

c) The nature and effects of Fulgentius' eloquence

Fulgentius' eloquence can also be viewed partly as a product of his aristocratic background. His early education in Greek and Latin and his holding of public office and positions of responsibility must have provided him with the training and the confidence for public speaking and the opportunities to develop these skills.

The monk Victor in his letter to Fulgentius referred to the latter as the *fons peritiae ac doctrinae*,¹⁶⁶ which he contrasts with his

own 'rustic speech'. Though his words are conventional, it is nonetheless clear that these two elements helped to make Fulgentius a preeminent church-leader.¹⁶⁷ They will now be considered in turn.

The *doctrina* or *scientia* referred to is, of course, Fulgentius' knowledge and understanding of Scripture as he had received it through the Fathers and Councils of the Catholic Church, in particular those of the African Catholic Church.¹⁶⁸ The authors most quoted by Fulgentius are Augustine, Ambrose and Cyprian.¹⁶⁹ He owes most to Augustine, particularly his mature writings, to the extent that Fulgentius has earned the title 'Augustinus breviatus'.¹⁷⁰ This can be seen in his works on predestination and grace, and other works where he touches on many different matters such as baptism and marriage.¹⁷¹

Augustine and earlier Catholic writers were also a profound influence on Fulgentius' teaching on the Trinity and Incarnation.¹⁷² Though he may be considered to have brought some new light to bear himself on aspects of these subjects,¹⁷³ it is his reiteration and explanation of received Catholic doctrine in these areas in the urgent cause of combatting Arian teaching that marks his greatest contribution. He has been called 'the last great opponent of Arianism'.¹⁷⁴ Fulgentius' claim to this title stems mostly from the fact that he had the facility of adapting his teaching to different levels of audience. His doctrine could be found in its starkest and most popular form in the *Psalmus Abecedarius contra Arianos*,¹⁷⁵ intended probably for church congregations.¹⁷⁶ Slightly more sophisticated is his young man's introduction to anti-Arianism (*Ep. 8 ad Donatum*),¹⁷⁷ and more

sophisticated again, a three-book detailed explanation of the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation written to satisfy the Arian Vandal king Thrasamund.¹⁷⁸ At the most erudite level there are the ten books *Contra Fabianum* - closely argued and seemingly exhaustive answers to the many questions of the Arian Fabianus, even quoting from the Greek Septuagint text.¹⁷⁹ A very popular handbook in the Middle Ages and an influence on the form of later scholastic *Summae*¹⁸⁰ was Fulgentius' *De Fide ad Petrum*,¹⁸¹ because it was held to condense the whole of Christian teaching into a manageable and memorable form so as to arm the Christian reader against any heresy.

We know that Fulgentius gave reading a high priority in his interpretation of Christian spirituality.¹⁸² He was himself influenced at several junctures in his life by the reading of certain patristic writings.¹⁸³ Fulgentius's monastic life had clearly given him the leisure and the means to develop his *doctrina* and *scientia*.¹⁸⁴ His long period in exile must have also given him much time for reading and meditation. He or one of his followers or fellow-bishops was no doubt responsible for the copying of Hilary of Poitiers' *De Trinitate* in the MS. Basilicanus D182, written in Cagliari in 510 in African uncial.¹⁸⁵ The contemporary annotations on this manuscript are a demonstration of the African preoccupation with collecting together Catholic learning on the Trinity.¹⁸⁶ Fulgentius also had manuscripts copied by his friend Abbot Eugippius of Lucullanum in Campania.¹⁸⁷ The latter, as well as writing the *Vita Severini*, a churchman who led the Catholics in the Alpine province of Noricum taken over by the Arian Rugians,¹⁸⁸ also made a large collection of excerpts from the writings of Augustine in order

to render his doctrine more readily digestible for the Roman noblewoman Proba.¹⁸⁹

Though he must have been well-versed in secular literature, Fulgentius, in the works we possess, almost entirely eschews it.¹⁹⁰ Where he does occasionally cite Virgil's *Aeneid*, he often twists the meaning of the citation to a Christian purpose¹⁹¹ and only does so when addressing the high-born or erudite.¹⁹² Fulgentius' *eloquentia* must have been greatly informed by his training in Greek and Latin grammar and literature. He maintained, however, that secular literature was where 'proud eloquence was learned', compared to holy writ, where eternal life was to be found.¹⁹³

It was not just Fulgentius' *doctrina* that made him such a preeminent church-leader but also the way in which he conveyed it to others. The primary method of communication was oral. A key theme throughout the *Vita* is Fulgentius' oral delivery.¹⁹⁴ This was necessary to fulfil his pastoral duties, which he did not feel should be limited to his monastery or diocese.¹⁹⁵ Fulgentius can be seen throughout the *Vita*, even before he was ordained, preaching, exhorting and cajoling others into living Christian lives and doing good works,¹⁹⁶ reconciling to the Catholic Church those who had gone over to the Arians,¹⁹⁷ answering questions on doctrine and explaining scripture.¹⁹⁸ Even the miracles in the *Vita* often took the form of persuading people to change their ways from sinful to virtuous.¹⁹⁹ Fulgentius is not portrayed as having the kind of holy charisma that is demonstrated by casting out demons or performing dramatic supernatural feats.²⁰⁰ It was Fulgentius'

eloquence which allowed him to perform apostolic deeds with the aid of the grace of God.²⁰¹

Fulgentius' literary eloquence must have followed naturally from his spoken eloquence. After all, Fulgentius dictated his writings²⁰² and the author of the *Vita* considered that it was 'as if he speaks when the codex entitled with his name is read'.²⁰³ The author also informs us that Fulgentius' works were often read out.²⁰⁴ For this reason, Fulgentius' literary eloquence (which can be gleaned from his surviving works) should be considered together with Fulgentius' oral eloquence (for which there is evidence in the *Vita* and from letters written to him).

Book Four of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* was intended as a guide explaining how the rules of rhetoric as they had been taught by the classical rhetoricians might be adapted for the Christian orator. It is then, a useful guide to help us understand how Fulgentius and his contemporaries might perceive his eloquence. There is evidence from other writers that Fulgentius could fulfil the three different aims of eloquence which Augustine adopts in Book Four from Cicero; that is to teach, to please and to move.²⁰⁵ There is much evidence in the *Vita* that Fulgentius could teach orally,²⁰⁶ and it is clear that he drew a large following as a consequence.²⁰⁷ Those who heard his spiritual teaching requested his guidance and instruction on religious subjects such as prayer and fasting²⁰⁸ or remission of sins (*Duo Libri ad Euthymium*).²⁰⁹ Several questions from African correspondents concerned the defence of the faith against the Arians on the subject of the Trinity (for example,

Ep. 8 ad Donatum,²¹⁰ *De Trinitate ad Felicem*²¹¹. Most often, indeed, requests for information came in the form of questions such as these.²¹²

Augustine had stated that to teach is a necessity.²¹³ Clarity and simplicity of expression were most important in Christian teaching.²¹⁴ The *sermo humilis*, an unaffected and unadorned explanatory style, is to be found commonly in Fulgentius' writings.²¹⁵ That people were aware of Fulgentius' skill is clear from the letter of Scarila asking Fulgentius to explain Baruch 3.36 and 38 in terms of the doctrine of the Incarnation, knowing that he would 'show us the way through a disclosure of the holy scriptures in plain language'.²¹⁶

However, Fulgentius himself was less concerned with the straight explanation of scripture, and placed more emphasis on teaching received doctrine. Since Fulgentius was often answering questions to do with the theology of the Trinity and Incarnation against the Arian interpretation, his writings often contain a sizable persuasive and polemical element.²¹⁷ At this point the distinction between the three types of aims of eloquence is less useful. What was needed was not so much exposition as argument and polemic. Indeed, there is a high incidence of the verb, *disputare* and its derivatives in Fulgentius' writings and in the *Vita*.²¹⁸

Augustine described the majestic style, which was intended to persuade or move the listener, as having nearly all the rhetorical ornaments of the temperate or pleasing style, such as antithesis, parallelism, chiasm, anaphora, hyperbole and superlative. The difference

is that this style does not seek self-consciously for these devices but rather that the emotional force of the thought might seize upon them as useful tools.²¹⁹

Something of this sort can be seen at the climactic end of *Ad Thrasamundum* Book One, where in teaching and persuading the king of the truth of the Catholic doctrine, Fulgentius concludes his section on the mystery of Christ the mediator.²²⁰ A structural analysis of this passage has demonstrated that in contrasting the humanity and divinity of Christ, the whole section is chiasmic (writing of Christ in the order; man, not man, God, man) as well as antithetical within individual sentences. The section, then, is binary both in its sentence construction and in its wider structure, emphasising the two natures of Christ necessary to man's salvation.²²¹ The whole section takes on the form of a credal formula with the necessary firmness and precision of language in the definition of the person of Christ. Indeed, Fulgentius made certain slight, but subtle, advances in the linguistic definition of Christ in His two natures.²²² Such references to God and Christ were naturally emotive to African Christian readers. Since many of Fulgentius' writings were preoccupied with countering the Arian challenge to the Catholic interpretation of the Trinity (this is particularly the case in works written directly against Arians such as the *Contra Fastidiosum*²²³ and *Contra Fabianum*)²²⁴ Fulgentius' *eloquentia* often tends towards this persuasive and emotionally-charged style.

Though Fulgentius did not succeed in persuading king Thrasamund to give up his Arian profession and adopt the Catholic one,²²⁵ the *Vita*

claims that on this occasion and at other times Fulgentius did manage to convert Arian laypeople and clerics to the Catholic creed.²²⁶

Fulgentius' ability to persuade and move people to live Christian lives is made manifest in the *Vita*²²⁷ and was clearly an important key to his effectiveness as a teacher and preacher. The *Vita* tells how Fulgentius' preaching moved bishop Bonifatius of Carthage to tears,²²⁸ 'everywhere he preached, he won the hearts of all, arousing them not to empty and vain applause but awakening compunction in their hearts'.²²⁹

This brings us to the other of the three aims of eloquence suggested by Augustine, that is, the aim to please. Fulgentius himself had condemned the proud speech of secular literature²³⁰ and the *Vita* also condemns such an appeal to an audience made purely for the benefit of gaining praise. It is clear from the testimony of other writers that Fulgentius was capable of writing in a pleasing fashion; the *Vita* speaks of the sweetness of his words²³¹ and the monk Victor refers to him as a mellifluous source.²³² However, the final effect of Fulgentius' alluring preaching was to awaken compunction of heart - it was intended to move the reader to repentance and Christian virtue. Augustine in *De Doctrina Christiana* tells us that eloquence of this temperate style in a Christian orator should not make giving pleasure the sole aim, as in pagan oratory, but that in its praises and censures it should aim at inducing the hearer to strive after or hold more firmly what it praises or avoid what it condemns. All three styles, he believed, should have the three qualities of clarity, beauty and persuasiveness, but each style's predominant quality should also be its primary object.²³³

Since Augustine held that truth was more important than expression, inevitably the humble explanatory style should predominate²²⁴ - indeed, 'the truth itself when exhibited in its naked simplicity, gives pleasure because it is the truth'.²²⁵ From the evidence of his writings Fulgentius seems to have shared this belief, though he does at times use the pleasing style. For Augustine, particular features of the temperate, pleasing style included short clauses harmonised by the use of parallels, antitheses, anaphora and anastrophe, exclamation, rhetorical question, repetition, plays on words and the many other rhetorical devices.²²⁶ Passages in this style can be found in Fulgentius' surviving sermons amongst more prosaic and paraenetic ones.²²⁷ As Augustine had said, it was necessary to vary the style to maintain the interest of the audience.²²⁸

However, Fulgentius also employed more elaborate language where it might have been traditionally expected, as when he addressed king Thrasamund²²⁹ or the ex-consul Theodorus²⁴⁰ and at the beginning of his sermon on the day of St. Stephen's martyrdom.²⁴¹ All these situations called for a panegyric style, pleasing to the addressee.²⁴² Fulgentius also employed this style when addressing like-minded friends, people with whom he willingly rather than dutifully communicated. The pleasure with which Fulgentius received a letter from Eugippius is passed on in the letter Fulgentius wrote in reply, which might have been entitled 'In Praise of Charity'²⁴³ and the pleasing style in which Fulgentius addressed the Roman noblewoman Proba²⁴⁴ clearly helped to make his letters to her popular with the literate public.²⁴⁵

Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, Book Four provides a useful framework in helping us to understand the diversity and aims of Fulgentius' rhetoric. Though Fulgentius was clearly able to teach, please and persuade, his priority was to teach. He may have been directly influenced by the *De Doctrina Christiana*, though indeed the message that religious truths and their communication were more important than the form in which they were expressed²⁴⁶ was to be found implicitly throughout Augustine's writings. Augustine and Fulgentius both maintained that eloquence was a spiritual gift from God which could be endowed upon anyone,²⁴⁷ but, as with Augustine, Fulgentius' eloquence was, at least partly, a product of his education and upbringing. The signs of this secular training sometimes became more evident, as when the traditions of rhetoric demanded the use of a panegyric style. In Fulgentius' case, his noble background must have contributed towards his great fame and the honour in which he was held, together with his *scientia, eloquentia* and *vita bona*.

Fulgentius wrote in reply to individuals in the expectation that his writings would be widely read and heard.²⁴⁸ The questions addressed to him came from African laymen and women and clerics, as well as from ascetically-minded Italians and monks from the eastern provinces.²⁴⁹ After his exile he had his sermons written down, no doubt for the use of clerics in preaching.²⁵⁰ Fulgentius was obviously filled with a strong sense of duty to reply to requests for 'spiritual food'.²⁵¹ He was painfully aware of the need, in particular, to provide his fellow Africans Catholics with the means to defend their confession in debate.

Different interest groups also demanded his time and attention, which was clearly sorely taxed.²⁵² Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage, supposedly calling upon Fulgentius' special relationship with the people of that city,²⁵³ appears to have been in a state of exasperation when he demanded in his request for answers to some questions on church discipline, 'please do not delay the answer, nor keep a spirit waiting with long expectation. Surely we deserve at least some of your attention'.²⁵⁴ Nor were communications easy, especially when Fulgentius was in exile,²⁵⁵ and his health does not appear to have been good.²⁵⁶ Yet we have no surviving evidence that contemporary African Catholics appealed to Catholic churchleaders elsewhere in the Mediterranean for answers to their doctrinal and pastoral questions, even when Fulgentius was in Sardinia.²⁵⁷ It is noticeable that African correspondents only very rarely appear in the other surviving contemporary letter-collections.²⁵⁸ They clearly wanted good African bread for their spiritual food.²⁵⁹

Fulgentius' eloquence and rhetoric were then an essential means of social and institutional bonding for the African Catholic Church both horizontally, in providing a common front amongst the bishops and clergy, that is, the Church hierarchy, and vertically, by seeking to answer pressing doctrinal and pastoral questions sent to him by faithful members of the laity. His skill also commended Fulgentius to ascetically-minded friends in Italy, who helped to provide him with the spiritual consolation he needed. Respectful requests for the opinion of the African bishops gave Fulgentius (speaking on their behalf) the opportunity to give an African opinion on the debate about Christology,

accepting as he did the Theopaschite formula,²⁶⁰ which Pope Hormisdas rejected,²⁶¹ but which Justinian later promoted as a compromise formula.²⁶² Their questioning also gave Fulgentius the opportunity to air at length the Augustinian view on predestination and grace which had been accepted by the Roman and African Churches in contrast to the view of the 'semipelagian' Faustus of Riez.²⁶³

Indeed, Fulgentius can be seen as a major link in the spread and perpetuation of those traditions within Africa and beyond. By appealing to Augustine and Cyprian, Fulgentius could demonstrate to its own members, to its fellow Catholic Churches and to its opponents that the African Catholic Church had a solid home-grown doctrinal basis. Though we have little more to go on than his own writings and the *Vita* for the history of the African Catholic Church in the late Vandal period, the survival of these sources (in several early manuscripts from the sixth century onwards)²⁶⁴ may not be so accidental as to give us a totally biased picture. What we have suggests that Fulgentius might fairly be considered the *doctor et magister Africanæ ecclesiæ* of his time that the author of the *Vita* considers him to be, just as Augustine was in his own day. The following episode, known to us from the same sources, helps to support this claim.

d) A Catholic leader and a Vandal king in confrontation: Fulgentius' debate with king Thrasamund

Fulgentius' eloquence came into particular demand from the time when king Thrasamund invited him to answer questions about his faith.²⁶⁵ It is worth looking at the controversy which then took place in Carthage, since there is evidence of it both from the *Vita* and from the works which Fulgentius wrote in reply: the *Responsiones* and the *Tres Libri ad Thrasamundum*.²⁶⁶ This affair is illustrative both of the impact of Fulgentius' eloquence and of the way in which Fulgentius seems to have filled the Catholic leadership vacuum in Carthage. He also demonstrates here his techniques of argument in defence of the faith and gives us his religious reasons for answering in its defence.

It is first, however, necessary to ask why Thrasamund should have sought to question Fulgentius on this occasion in the latter part of his reign. We have seen how in Huneric's reign external political influences can be seen to have influenced the religious politics of a Vandal king within his own kingdom. Indeed, we could posit such influences on the actions that Gunthamund took towards the Catholic Church. For instance, it is possible that Zeno could have influenced Gunthamund's recall of Eugenius, bishop of Carthage from exile in 487 because the emperor's position in his own realm was seen to be stronger in his last years.²⁶⁷ Whether any such diplomatic pressure influenced Gunthamund's decision to recall all the Catholic bishops in 494 can only be surmised, since we know little about the attitude of the Emperor Anastasius towards the African Church. Indeed, he appears to have been

too embroiled in the Monophysite question and the Acacian Schism to have shown much concern.²⁶⁸ We know too little about Gunthamund's domestic politics to suggest any link between this and his religious policies. We only know that he kept the bishops in exile until 494 and possibly undertook some persecution of Catholics afterwards.²⁶⁹

Thrasamund appears to have wished to allow the Catholic bishops to die out and not be replaced. When an attempt was made to fill the vacant sees in Byzacena, the newly-elected were exiled, this time not just outside their dioceses (as appears to have happened in Huneric's and Gunthamund's time), but to Sardinia and even to Gaul where they would be well out of trouble. Their churches appear to have been closed.²⁷⁰ However, the fact that these exiles could readily communicate with supporters in Italy suggests that Thrasamund did not have any very close control over them. That they could communicate with Catholics at home would support the idea that he did not have very close control over links between Sardinia and Africa either.²⁷¹

Thrasamund's marriage to the Ostrogothic king Theodoric's daughter Amalafrida in 500 was clearly a source of security for him, since it provided a possible alliance against Constantinople and many Gothic soldiers, which he appears to have used to secure his frontier with the Moors to the south and west of his kingdom.²⁷² It also furnished him with the western third of Sicily which had been lost by Gunthamund. Thrasamund, according to Procopius also 'became a very special friend of the Emperor Anastasius'.²⁷³ As to his religious policy, Procopius tells us that he 'continued to force the Christians to

change their ancestral faith, not by torturing their bodies as his predecessors had done, but by seeking to win them with honours and offices and presenting them with great sums of money'.²⁷⁴ Those who would not convert he ignored and he let off criminals provided they convert.²⁷⁵ This kind of softly-softly approach to conversion to Arianism may have characterised Thrasamund's religious policy in general, but by the time that Fulgentius was called to Carthage in the latter part of his reign, Thrasamund was using both terror and bribery to get Catholics to convert, or so the *Vita* tells us.²⁷⁶ The king may indeed have had some degree of success. The vehemence of Fulgentius' *Psalmus Abecedarius contra Arianos* written at the time of his recall to Carthage or soon after, suggests that Fulgentius was addressing an emergency situation.²⁷⁷ He later argued against the Arian Fastidiosus who had been a Catholic monk.²⁷⁸ It was in circumstances such as this that Fulgentius was called to Carthage.

Since according to several sources Thrasamund was something of an intellectual, he may also have invited Fulgentius to Carthage because of an interest in theological controversy.²⁷⁹ He had already set questions to other Catholics but was unsatisfied with their answers.²⁸⁰ Huneric had likewise questioned the most learned of the bishops whom he called to his conference and then actually beaten them.²⁸¹ Fulgentius may have been just another in the line of Catholics questioned by Thrasamund, but if so no traces remain of the other encounters. The *Vita* states that Thrasamund asked for the person who could best argue for the Catholic faith, and so Fulgentius, whose fame had spread to Carthage from Sardinia was despatched to that city.²⁸²

Fulgentius' invitation then, appears to have had some significance within Thrasamund's religious policy. The *Vita* tells us that the king began to pretend to inquire simply into the basis of the Catholic faith. He listened patiently to those who answered and did not despise or reject them but said that he could not find anyone who satisfied him.²⁸³ The author of the *Vita* said that he did this 'more with the aim of deceiving the multitude'.²⁸⁴ The king apparently wished to appear to be reasonable and conciliatory towards the Catholics, and was concerned about the attitude of the 'multitude' towards him. It becomes clear in the *Vita* that this 'multitude' refers to the Catholic populace of Carthage²⁸⁵ and indeed, to judge from other sources²⁸⁶ as well as the *Vita*,²⁸⁷ their attitude was important for the stability of the king in his capital. Thrasamund appears to have been conciliatory in a way that Huneric had not been. Thrasamund's initial patience towards the slowness of Fulgentius' answers,²⁸⁸ his praise of them²⁸⁹ and the readiness he showed to allow him to confer with others,²⁹⁰ not preventing the passing around of the answers,²⁹¹ also suggest Thrasamund's desire to appear conciliatory, as well as perhaps a certain confidence that he, as the king, was really in control. The author of the *Vita* gained no real benefit in promoting his hero by showing the king's apparent reasonableness, so that we have some cause to believe that this is how he acted in reality.

Diesner has argued that such a stance must have been occasioned by the rise to power in the Balkans of Count Vitalian, who put considerable military pressure upon the Emperor Anastasius to reestablish the authority of the Council of Chalcedon and mend the

relations with the bishop of Rome broken during the Acacian Schism. For this reason Diesner wishes to place Fulgentius' visit some time between 513 and 515 when Vitalian was in power.²⁹² A better explanation for Thrasamund's apparent temporising would be that it was a reaction to the accession of the Latin-speaking and pro-Chalcedonian Emperor Justin in 518. This new ruler had quickly ended the Acacian Schism and shown himself conciliatory to the bishop of Rome.²⁹³ He had reversed the pro-Monophysite policy of Anastasius. We know from a letter of the emperor to Pope Hormisdas that Justin sent a legation to Thrasamund, *regem magnificum*, in 519.²⁹⁴ We do not know Thrasamund's reaction, but the legation was clearly solicitous for the Catholic Church, for Justin mentioned this matter to Hormisdas.²⁹⁵ We have seen that the presence of an ambassador might have positive or negative effects upon the Catholic Church, particularly in Carthage²⁹⁶ and we have also seen the volatility of the populace. This would suggest a likely external political factor influencing Thrasamund's policy towards the Catholics.

By this stage of his life Thrasamund must also have been concerned about the succession; it was no doubt clear that Hilderic was to succeed, as he duly did in 523. Hilderic was the grandson of Valentinian III,²⁹⁷ last of the Theodosian emperors, known for their Catholic piety, as well as the son of the Arian king, Huneric.²⁹⁸ He was also a good friend of Justin's son and successor, Justinian.²⁹⁹ There may well have been good reason to believe that Hilderic would be indulgent towards the Catholics. Thrasamund evidently feared this, since he made Hilderic swear an oath not to give them freedom of worship.³⁰⁰ The Catholics for their part may have had good reason for hope: Hilderic

in fact ignored his oath on succession, and according to Victor of Tonnena had already decided to do so before succeeding.³⁰¹ Indeed, Fulgentius, just before he returned to exile in Sardinia, apparently promised one Carthaginian nobleman that freedom would return to the Catholic Church.³⁰² Fulgentius may have understood the changing political situation in the Mediterranean better than people in Africa, given his contacts with Roman nobles who had connections with Byzantium and with others in Italy.

Thrasamund's apparent reasonableness towards the Catholic faith may even be dated after the defeat of the Vandals by the Moorish leader Cabaon, which took place probably in the later years of the reign.³⁰³ Before his victory, according to Procopius, Cabaon had made efforts to win over the hearts and minds of the Catholics along the line of the Vandals' military route by sending spies who cleaned the Catholic churches, treated their priests respectfully and left money for the poor,³⁰⁴ whilst the Vandals on their way past, had abused the churches, using them as stables and had beaten the priests.³⁰⁵ This story, if true, underlines the fact that the Catholic populace was a force whose political loyalty was worth taking into consideration; the rising power of the Moors in the south must have underlined this fact.

However, perhaps responding temporarily to the lesson learnt from this episode, and probably waiting to see the outcome of the succession of Justin, Thrasamund does not appear to have maintained this appearance of wanting to keep up some kind of dialogue with the Catholics.³⁰⁶ According to the *Vita*, Thrasamund abandoned his

controversy with Fulgentius because his Arian priests persuaded him that bringing Fulgentius to debate in Carthage was counter-productive, since it had aroused the Catholic populace in the capital and since Fulgentius had converted Arians to the Catholic faith, including clergy.³⁰⁷

Naturally, there is a strong panegyrical theme running throughout the *Vita*, which clearly wishes to show that despite the adverse conditions in which he found himself, Fulgentius always turned them to his advantage or that of his faith,³⁰⁸ and the above explanation of the reasons for Fulgentius' second exile clearly fits this aim. However, as we have seen before, there might still be substance to the *Vita*'s panegyrical claims.³⁰⁹ The author would, after all, be more likely to choose to describe incidents which bore out the heroism of his hero than to invent or seriously distort events which might be well-known to his audience. We have seen that Thrasamund had shown a certain indulgence towards Fulgentius in allowing him to collaborate with others, amongst whom was probably his friend the noble layman, Monimus, with whom he had had the freedom to discuss topics such as predestination.³¹⁰ Since it was not contributory to the author's panegyrical purpose to show Thrasamund in a good light, we may accept the detail as genuine.

Fulgentius' reply to 'the stupidity of the rambling statement' of the king divided the objections into headings and answered them with 'short, provable, relevant answers, ones weighty with the authorities of testimonies and shining with the light of all reason' according to the *Vita*.³¹¹ This written reply, which survives, is known as the *Responsiones Fulgentii contra Arianos*.³¹² In answering, Fulgentius and his collaborators drew upon their accumulated anti-Arian wisdom. Most of

the questions concerned the relation of the Son to the Father, and the Biblical texts used and arguments adduced could be found in other African works of the same genre, such as the *Liber Fidei Catholicae*.³¹³ Apparently the book was allowed to circulate together with the questions and answers, whereupon the Carthaginian people, or so the *Vita* claims, considered that the king had been defeated in the argument.³¹⁴

That Fulgentius was then made to answer in much more difficult conditions is indicated not only in the *Vita* but also in Fulgentius' next reply. This work, the *Tres Libri ad Thrasamundum*, was directly addressed to the king himself and so the details of how Fulgentius answered, given in the introduction, is likely to bear some relation to what actually happened, even if expressed in the form of an apology.³¹⁵ Thrasamund's change of tactic strongly suggests that the king had reacted to adverse publicity, perhaps realising that in his over-confidence he had allowed Fulgentius too free a rein, and risked destabilising Thrasamund's own position in his capital. Gundobad, king of the Burgundians, perhaps himself also learning from experience, had stated when he held a controversy between Catholic and Arian bishops that 'I do not wish that this should be done before the whole people, lest the populace be aroused'.³¹⁶ There is reason to believe then that Fulgentius' answers and his preaching to the Catholic faithful in Carthage prior to the contest, which the king had perhaps unwisely allowed, had forced Thrasamund to take a more defensive attitude towards his Catholic respondent.

This defensiveness is mentioned not only in the *Vita* but also in Fulgentius' own work. He informs us that so prolix was the book of propositions sent to him by the king this second time, that with night approaching 'with the beginning of the work scarcely read through', he had asked that he should have a night to finish reading it.³¹⁷ The king refused, kept the bishop waiting and then demanded an answer. Fulgentius says that he answered from what he could remember of the beginning of the work because he did not wish to be thought proud by refusing to answer nor be blamed for being silent from lack of trust in the true faith.³¹⁸ In his *Tres Libri ad Thrasamundum* Fulgentius had to answer quickly, accurately and at length in order to rebut Thrasamund's prolix work.³¹⁹ As with the *Contra Varinadum*, the three books may have been meant as a symbolic assertion of Catholic Trinitarian beliefs. The work again mainly concerned the relation of the Son and the Father, the first book being about the mystery of the mediator, the second about the divinity of the Son of God and the third about the sacrament of the Lord's passion.

The king questioned Fulgentius no further, but Fulgentius had to answer the Arian bishop Pinta with another work and the Arian priest Abrugila on the Holy Spirit with a short *Commonitorium* made up of supporting Biblical texts.³²⁰ The *Vita* tells us that the king wished to question Fulgentius further, but his Arian supporters argued that Fulgentius' teaching was undermining the Arian faith of their followers and the king would soon be powerless to reverse the tide of conversion to the Catholic faith.³²¹ The king may not have initially wanted to

appear to have conceded defeat, but it was his decision to send Fulgentius back into exile.³²²

Fulgentius' alleged influence on the Catholic populace of Carthage seems to be supported by the fact that he sent a letter to the Carthaginian people after he had returned to exile in Sardinia, exhorting them to avoid all the pitfalls which could lead unfortunates to spiritual death.³²³ It was customary for the bishop of Carthage to address his own people in this way, and both Eugenius and Cyprian seem to have done this from exile;³²⁴ the impression is therefore that Fulgentius was regarded as a kind of surrogate bishop of Carthage, in the absence of an actual incumbent. Eugenius died around 505 with no successor until Bonifatius in 523.³²⁵ Indeed, the author of the *Vita*, who was probably Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage, compares Fulgentius at one point to Aurelius of Carthage.³²⁶ The *Vita* describes how, when the exiled bishops returned at the beginning of Hilderic's reign and arrived in Carthage, all attention was turned to Fulgentius.³²⁷ Ferrandus himself, writing to Fulgentius, stated that they too (supposedly the Carthaginians) deserved part of his attention.³²⁸ The author of the *Vita* seems to consider that on his return from exile Fulgentius was far more the focus of attention of the people of the city than was Bonifatius, their own bishop.³²⁹ Indeed, Bonifatius, dedicating a church at Furnos in Proconsularis, waited for Fulgentius, who then preached for two days, much to Bonifatius' delight, according to the *Vita*.³³⁰

Fulgentius then, it would seem, had gained great popularity, not only in Byzacena, which apparently 'rejoiced as one people on his

return',³²¹ but also in Carthage itself, where he appears to have had a special relationship with the people, and beyond.³²² His period of greatness seems to have fallen in the later years of Thrasamund's reign; in Hilderic's reign, with the reconstruction of the organisation of the Catholic Church, Fulgentius seems to have been more of a figurehead than a leader.³²³ Though his skills in combatting Arian arguments³²⁴ and in answering questions on Church discipline³²⁵ were still in demand afterwards, it was at the time of his recall to Carthage and after that Fulgentius' eloquence was most sought after. His exchange with Thrasamund was, it appears, his greatest moment, and he clearly attempted to exploit the opportunity to the full.

It is thus worth looking more closely at Fulgentius' address to the king in his *Tres Libri ad Thrasamundum*, the only such address we have by a Catholic to a Vandal king.³²⁶ He praised the king's learning, saying that 'it should be considered rare that the spirit of a barbarian king, occupied by the numerous concerns of his kingdom, should be inflamed by a fervent desire for wisdom'.³²⁷ Only a Roman and a man of leisure would normally be so inclined; Fulgentius flatters Thrasamund by assimilating him to Roman ideals. Fulgentius continued to praise the king's desire for learning from a stance of superiority as a Roman, starting from the premise that the Romans had a monopoly on being civilised.³²⁸ Thrasamund had indeed been keen to adopt Roman ways, wishing to be considered a great renovator of the city of Carthage and a patron of poets.³²⁹ But Fulgentius exploited the greater cultural achievements of the Romans in order to praise Thrasamund while at the same time patronising him by emphasising his barbarian origin. In so

doing Fulgentius was himself employing one of the greatest cultural resources the Romans possessed and could still use, that is, rhetoric.

Fulgentius continues, 'For you know and believe firmly that he who desires to know the truth adheres to greater advantages than he who, by subjecting peoples, desires to extend further his worldly kingdom'.²⁴⁰ This opinion is to be found elsewhere in Fulgentius' work²⁴¹ and reflects similar ideas expressed by Augustine in *De Civitate Dei*.²⁴² However, in this case it is possible, considering the probable historical context, that Fulgentius is hinting that it is more important for the king to settle his relations with his Catholic subjects than to spend all his time fighting the Moors.

In addressing the king, Fulgentius followed 1 Peter 2.17, stating that God should be feared and the king honoured.²⁴³ Any wise man, he said, knows that the King of Kings who ordered that temporal kings should be honoured should be feared so much more. To fear the eternal king equally with the temporal king is to belittle the former and to judge the Creator by the same qualities as the created.²⁴⁴ By means of such arguments, Fulgentius simultaneously put the Vandal king in his place in the divine scheme of things and attacked the Arian diminution of the divinity of Christ.

As to the king's quest for the truth, Fulgentius stated that this would only benefit him if his spirit inclined in the right direction and was not held captive by small-minded error.²⁴⁵ He then embarked on a description of the supposed misconceptions about God the

Father and God the Son entertained by the different heretical groups.³⁴⁶ There was to be no semblance of speculation about these things nor any philosophical debate. Correct belief was a soteriological necessity, any other consideration being superfluous.³⁴⁷ Fulgentius did not even try to argue the temporal benefits of Catholic faith, as Avitus of Vienne had done before Gundobad.³⁴⁸

Nowhere in the Catholic literature of the Vandal period is the reason for replying to those challenging the Catholic faith made so explicit as in the introduction to the first book of *Ad Thrasamundum*, addressed as it was, to its most powerful challenger, the Vandal king. The introduction gives the *raison d'être* behind all such literature on faith, which makes up a good part of Fulgentius' writings, and of many other writings of this era from African Catholics. In many ways it sums up Fulgentius' most important contribution to the Catholic Church of his time and exhibits the mentality which allowed it to survive in more than just name.

Fulgentius explains why he did not wish to be silent in the face of Thrasamund's questioning - 'I hardly doubt that by your study, most clement king, you have not learned that, among those who are redeemed by participation in Christian grace, not to wish to assert faith is to deny it'.³⁴⁹ He backed this up by citing Matthew 10:32-3, 'He who confesses me before men, so too will I confess him before my Father who is in heaven' and so too would denial be reciprocated.³⁵⁰ The parallel Fulgentius then adopts is suited to a work addressed to a king - the

simile of a cowardly soldier who does not defend a royal fortification.³⁵¹

In justifying his need to answer, Fulgentius did not wish the king to suspect a note of pride or contumacy³⁵² - the necessity of answering imposed the duty of frank response.³⁵³ He provides a Biblical basis for this positive duty. Quoting Isaiah 58.1, 'Shout, do not cease, raise your voice just like a trumpet'. This pertained to all preachers of the Church, not just to prophets like Isaiah.³⁵⁴ It is further supported by 1 Peter 3.15, 'Always be ready to reply to those questioning you on the reason for the faith and hope you have in you'.³⁵⁵ This could be considered to be one of the most relevant Biblical precepts for African Catholics of the time, and Fulgentius also cited it to the young layman Donatus when he requested how he should answer Arians;³⁵⁶ it was used by Ferrandus too.³⁵⁷ Fulgentius rounds off his justification for his frank reply with an apt citation from Psalm 118:46, 'I was speaking of your testimonies in the sight of kings and I was not thrown into confusion'.³⁵⁸ The same citation was used again by Facundus in his defence of the Three Chapters in addressing Justinian,³⁵⁹ while Ambrose had used it in reference to Arian emperors.³⁶⁰ Fulgentius was here employing the valuable model of the prophet confessing God before the Old Testament king. We have seen how the pejorative comparison of Vandal kings with Old Testament tyrants was a source of concern to the former.³⁶¹ At the same time, in adopting this stance, Fulgentius was reasserting the identification of the Catholic faithful with the chosen people of the Israelites,³⁶² with Fulgentius himself as their leader and voice.

Fulgentius is presented by the *Vita* as a great centripetal force within the African Catholic Church. For instance, in Carthage 'his presence made the bishops stable'.³⁶³ These are presumably the bishops of the neighbouring sees in Proconsularis; it can be envisaged that there would have been a serious leadership vacuum within this province, in particular with the absence of a bishop of Carthage. Unfortunately, the sparsity of the evidence makes it difficult to put the real importance of Fulgentius within the African Catholic Church as a whole into perspective. However, the survival of the *Vita* and of Fulgentius' own works may not be so unrepresentative. Though there were clearly a number of learned men amongst Fulgentius' correspondents and associates,³⁶⁴ there is little hint whether in Fulgentius' own writings, in the *Vita* or from other sources that anyone else rivalled Fulgentius in Africa in his literary, rhetorical and leadership skills.

It must have also been a great boost to the prestige of the Church in Byzacena that one of their bishops had acquired such an important role within the African Catholic Church as a whole and within Carthage in particular in the absence of a bishop of Carthage. The difficult straits in which the Catholic Church in Africa found itself must have given rise to many situations which might be considered irregular in terms of Church discipline as it had been laid down in the canons of past councils. Some of these irregularities must have necessarily developed out of the particular circumstances in which the Church found itself. For instance, the Church in Byzacena appears to have been able to maintain a sense of solidarity more easily than could the Church in Proconsularis; assertions of its authority were, not

unnaturally, considered unwelcome by the bishop of Carthage after 523. With the reconstitution of the Catholic Church after that date, the emergency measures and abuses of power to which difficult conditions within the Church had given rise needed to be ironed out.

CHAPTER 7 NOTES

1) For the work as a whole see Lapeyre *Fulgence de Ruspe*; H.-J. Diesner *Fulgentius von Ruspe*; G. Ficker 'Zur Würdigung der Vita Fulgentii' *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 21 (1901) 9-42; M. Simonetti 'Note sulla Vita Fulgentii' *AB* 100 (1982) 277-289; W. Berschin *Biographie und Epochenstil im lateinischen Mittelalter* 1 (Stuttgart, 1986) 235-241.

1a) I find Courtois' arguments for the death of Fulgentius in 527 (Courtois 300 n.3, expanded by Diesner *Fulgentius von Ruspe* 5-8) more convincing than those of G. Krüger 'Ferrandus und Fulgentius' in *Adolf von Harnack-Ehrung. Beiträge zur Kirchengeschichte... zu seinem siebenzigsten Geburtstage* (Leipzig, 1921) 219-23 and Lapeyre *Fulgence de Ruspe* 322-6 for his death in 532. Courtois' dating has received much support (e.g. J.J. Gavigan *De vita monastica in Africa septentrionali inde a temporibus S. Augustini usque ad invasiones Arabum* (Rome-Turin, 1962) 145 n.1 and A. Isola (ed.) *Fulgenzio di Ruspe. Psalmo contra i vandali ariani* (Turin, 1983) 27. The *Vita* informs us that Fulgentius died in his sixty-fifth year and the twenty-fifth year of his episcopate, VF 28.17 (139). Hence with the 527 dating, he was born in 462 and became bishop in 502.

2) VF 14 (75-7), 27 (127-133).

3) VF 20-1 (99-107), 25 (119-121).

4) VF 15-16 (79-85), 19 (95-97).

5) Pontius *Vita Cypriani* 7.12 ed. A.A.R. Bastiaensen (Rome, 1975) (20), 11.8 (30) 16.4 (42). VF 6.6 (37) tells us that Fulgentius and Felix were *martyrialis agonis effecti participes* when they suffered beating at the

hands of an Arian priest. Fulgentius was thus now decorated *primae... confessionis... ornamento* (VF 7.9 (43)).

6) To the author of the *Vita* such a physical testing of their faith was necessary as well as voluntary asceticism in order to prove their faith (VF 6.6 (37)). Such a testing was much more of a possibility for a Catholic in Africa at this time, and contrasts with the ideas expressed in contemporary Gaul and Italy that the age of persecutions had passed (cf. e.g. Victricius of Rouen *Liber de Laude Sanctorum* 1, CSEL 64 ed. R. Demeulenaere (Turnhout, 1985) 69, Caesarius of Arles *Sermo* 69.1, SC 330 ed. M.-J. Delag  (Paris, 1986) 142) and that martyrdom was possible in peacetime without blood, through the practice of Christian virtues and self-restraint (cf. e.g. Paulinus of Nola *Carmen* 12.9, CSEL 30 ed. W. Hartel (Vienna, 1894) 43, *Vita Honorati* 37.3, SC 235 ed. M.-D. Valentin (Paris, 1977) 170). On the dilution of the concept of martyrdom see H. Delehaye *Sanctus: Essai sur le culte des saints dans l'antiquit * (Brussels, 1927) 109-121.

7) See P. F. Chifflet *Fulgentii Ferrandi Carthaginensis ecclesiae diaconi Opera* (Dijon, 1649) XXI and Lapeyre VF LIV-LXVII, followed by e.g. Simonetti 'Note sulla *Vita Fulgentii*' 277 n.1 and Berschin *Biographie und Epochenstil* 235-6. Against this identification see Ficker 'W rdigung der *Vita Fulgentii*' 12, who considers that the author must have come from Fulgentius' immediate monastic entourage, and A. Isola 'Sulla paternit  della *Vita Fulgentii*' *VetChr* 23 (1986) 63-71, who considers that the author was at Ruspe in the last years of Fulgentius' life.

8) *Epistola Dogmatica* to Eugippius, PLS 4 23; cf. *Ep. 13 Ferrandi* 1 to Fulgentius CCSL 91 385.

- 9) *Epistola Dogmatica* to Eugippius PLS 4 23.
- 10) *Ep.ad Felicianum*, PLS 4 36-7. Felicianus as dedicatee, VF Preface 1 (5).
- 11) VF Preface 21 (7).
- 12) VF Preface 7 (5).
- 13) *Epistola Dogmatica* to Eugippius and *Ep.ad Eugippium*, PLS 4 22-3, 38; *Ep.ad Felicem*, PLS 4 37; cf. VF 5.13 (31); *Epistola Parenetica* to Reginus, PL 67 929.
- 14) VF Preface 21 (9).
- 15) VF *passim*.
- 16) For instance, it is Ferrandus who is expected *quasi debitus haereditarius*, to write the answer to a second question which a certain *dux* Reginus had asked of Fulgentius, in the *Epistola Parenetica* to Reginus, PL 67 929CD. For Fulgentius' reply to the first question see *Ep. ad Reginum*, CCSL 91A 619-24. Eugippius, abbot of the Campanian monastery of Lucullanum, had been a friend and correspondent of Fulgentius and having heard of Fulgentius' death, turned to Ferrandus to ask him about this and to provide him with a theological retort to an Arian count. Eugippius went so far as to suppose that Ferrandus was Fulgentius' successor as bishop of Ruspe, *Epistola Dogmatica* to Eugippius, PLS 4 22-36 esp.23. Eugippius had previously asked theological questions of Fulgentius. See Fulgentius *Ep.5 ad Eugippium*, CCSL 91 235-46 and the fragments of a letter to Eugippius about a certain Pelagian, CCSL 91A 870-3.
- 17) Just as Fulgentius wrote answers on the request of certain 'Scythian' monks concerning grace and freewill and on the Theopaschite question (cf. above 306, *Ep.15 Episcoporum*, CCSL 91A 447-57, *Ep.17*

Episcoporum, CCSL 91A 563-615), Ferrandus wrote replies to a certain Severus in Constantinople and to the Roman deacon Anatolius on the Theopaschite question, *Ep. ad Severum*, PL 67 910-21 and *Ep. ad Anatolium*, PL 67 889-908. See M. Simonetti 'Ferrando di Cartagine nella controversia teopaschita' in *Fides Sacramenti, Sacramentum Fidei. Studies in honour of Pieter Smulders* (Assen, 1981) 219-32. He also replied to the Roman deacons Anatolius and Pelagius concerning Justinian's edict against the Three Chapters in 543/4, *Ep. ad Anatolium et Pelagium*, PL 67 921-8. These letters and those outlined in the previous note would suggest that Ferrandus had taken over Fulgentius' mantle as the leading authority on doctrine in the African Church from Fulgentius' death (probably in 527) up till his own death in 546/7, in the absence of any other African writers covering these subjects known to us.

18) For anonymity see VF LIV. Ferrandus' concern for anonymity is demonstrated by *Ep. ad Eugippium*, PLS 4 38. When sending a letter to Eugippius, Ferrandus states 'on this, I did not wish to write my name, which the Holy Spirit has now written in your heart'.

19) *Epistola Dogmatica* to Eugippius, PLS 4 36, 'if his life were to be written about faithfully, it would provide sufficiently great examples of virtues to those desiring to imitate them'.

20) VF Preface 2-7 (5).

21) VF Preface 13 (7).

22) E.g. *Ep. 13 Ferrandi* 3, CCSL 91 387 lines 59-62 to Fulgentius, ... *epistulam de oratione... pro splendore sui a multis petitur ad legendum*; *Ep. Victoris* 4, CCSL 91 279 lines 91-4 to Fulgentius, *sicut prae ceteris sacerdotibus mentibus et oculis intuentium fulges, ita te cupimus*

*frequenter florulentis opusculis fulgentiorem et nobis et omnibus
gentibus apparere; Pacundus of Hermiane Liber contra Nocianum* PL 67
855A.

23) VF Preface 15, 16 (7). The concern that Fulgentius should be known about by people abroad is very rare in hagiographical prefaces. However, the concern that the subject should be known for his life as well as for his writings is to be found in Pontius' *Vita Cypriani* 1.1 (4). Likewise, Possidius in his *Vita Augustini* maintained that though Augustine was well-known as a great writer in defence of the faith, he was not only the erudite scribe but also practised what he preached as only those around him could know; 31.9 (238-40).

24) VF Preface 7 (7).

25) VF Preface 8 (7).

26) Bonifatius, bishop of Carthage was deceased by the time the *Vita* was written. VF 26-17 (125) and 27.27 (133) refer to him as *sanctae memoriae*. Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.535, MGH a.a.11 198 tells that in that year Reparatus became bishop after Bonifatius. In this later section of his *Chronicon*, Victor of Tonnena's dates are never more than two years out and most are a year later than other sources give. For instance, Victor has Belisarius' invasion of Africa falling in 534, instead of in 533. Similarly, Gelimer's accession is dated by Victor to 531 rather than 530 (Courtois 402). However, Victor gives Bonifatius' year of succession as 523 as other sources do, MGH a.a.11 197. Since Victor was bishop of Tonnena in Proconsularis, Reparatus would have been his metropolitan until the latter's deposition in 551, so that Victor would have had reason to know Reparatus' regnal dates accurately. Certainly Reparatus was the bishop who presided over the Council of

Carthage in 535, CCSL 149 283 and *Coll. Avell. Ep.* 85, CSEL 35 328. Victor of Tonnena's phrasing suggests that Reparatus succeeded immediately to Bonifatius without an intervening gap. Cf. VF LXIV.

27) I incline towards the opinion of Ficker 'Zur Würdigung der Vita Fulgentii' 32, who considers that one of the aims of the *Vita* was to show to Felicianus, now bishop of Ruspe, how Fulgentius, even as a bishop, had maintained the independence of his monastery in Ruspe from episcopal control, cf. VF 27.6-8 (127). Ficker's argument is supported by the fact that we have a fragment from the Council of Carthage of 535 in which Felicianus of Ruspe asks the Council that the rights of Fulgentius' monastery in the town should be confirmed as the founder had laid them down, to which the Council agreed. After 535, this preoccupation in the *Vita* would not have been so relevant. What is more, if the *Vita* was written much after 535, we should expect the effects of the Byzantine reconquest to have influenced the *Vita* or to have received some kind of mention, in addition to that in VF Preface 16 (7).

28) See the citation from the monk Victor, n.22; cf. the letters written to him by those seeking his opinion on theological, pastoral and spiritual matters CCSL 91 and 91A and S.T.Stevens 'Fulgentius and his Circle' *Traditio* 38 (1982) 329-36. The statement that Fulgentius wrote theological and disciplinary letters on behalf of all the bishops exiled in Sardinia (VF 18 (91-93)) seems to be supported in the letter of the bishops to some Scythian monks on predestination (CCSL 91A 447 and 456) - *unus ex nobis, in quantum Dominus servis suis gratiam dignatur donare sermonis, illis omnibus, quae memoratos fratres adversus gratiam et praedestinationem intimastis vel sentire vel dicere, tribus libris*

vestro nomini dedicatis sufficienti disputatione respondit. The work has been handed down to us in Fulgentius' name (CCSL 91A 458).

29) VF 10.4 (59); 27.25 (133); 7.17 (45) cf. *Vita Cypriani*; 18.6 (91) cf. *Vita Caesarii* 2.6, PL 67 1027C.

30) VF Preface 16 (7).

31) Cf. C.Saumagne 'Etude sur la propriété ecclésiastique à Carthage d'après les nouvelles 36 et 37 de Justinien' *BZ* 22 (1913) 69-87, which shows that Justinian had, apparently for political reasons, postponed until 535 the return of property to the Catholic Church which had been confiscated by the Arians, to the chagrin of the Catholic clergy. Justinian seemed to desire the entry of Arian clerics into the Catholic clergy.

32) VF Preface 6 (5) and 6.24 (39). Cf. Ferrandus *Ep. ad Eugippium* PLS 4 37. This is a standard theme in hagiography; cf. e.g. Pontius *Vita Cypriani* 3.10 (12), Paulinus of Milan *Vita Ambrosii* 55.1 (122).

33) VF 1.1-2 (11).

34) VF 1.3 (11).

35) VF 1.3 (11).

36) VF 1.4, 6 (11-13).

37) VF 1.7 (13).

38) VF 1.8-9 (13).

39) VF 1.10 (13).

40) Note e.g. the delay between the reelection of bishops against the prohibition of the king, their ordering into exile, and the actual dispatch into exile of these bishops; VF 13.10 (69), 13.16 (71), 17.1 (87).

41) He does not appear to have moved much from the locality, VF 5.28

(33). For taxes see VF 2.1 (15).

42) VF 2 and 3 (15-23).

43) Fulgentius' procuratorship must have fallen around the time of the later part of Huneric's reign or the earlier part of Gunthamund's reign. Fulgentius entered Faustus' monastery, which had been formed by Faustus when exiled by Huneric, VF 3.1-3 (21), see above 242-3. This monastery was later dispersed by another persecution which caused Faustus to flee (VF 5.12 (31)), and which must have taken place before the bishops were recalled by Gunthamund in 494, *Laterculus Regum Vandalorum* (Augiensis) 9, MGH a.a.13 459.

44) Fulgentius himself encountered many monasteries in Byzacena: VF 2.2 (15), 5.13 (31), 8.1 (47), 10.6 (59), 12.1 (63), 16.7 (83), 19.1 (93), 24.1 (113), 28.2 (135). For Fulgentius' monasticism see Gavigan *De vita monastica in Africa septentrionali* 144-81. Others are mentioned in the acts of the Council of Carthage, 525; CCSL 149 273, the monastery of abbot Petrus; CCSL 149 279 lines 283-4, monastery *de Praecisu* near Leptis Minor; line 287, monastery *Baccense* near Maximiana. For monasticism generally in this period see Gavigan *De vita monastica in Africa septentrionali* 182-230.

45) See H-J.Diesner 'Das Mönchtum der Vandalenzeit in Afrika' in *Kirche und Staat im spätromischen Reich* (Berlin, 1963) 142-3. See CCSL 149 275 lines 101-3.

46) VF 6.2-3 (35), 6.16 (37).

47) Monasteries might act as safe houses for relics of martyrs. This appears to have been the case with the monastery of Bigua in Carthage; for martyrs of the Vandal period, see *Passio Septem Martyrum* 16 (62);

martyrs of the period before Constantine, L.Ennabli and V.Baïrem-Ben Osman 'Note sur la topographie chrétienne de Carthage: Les mosaïques du monastère de Bigua' *REA* 28 (1982) 3-22.

48) This was clearly the case with the monastery of the abbot Petrus; CCSL 149 276 and 279.

49) CCSL 149 274 lines 57-9.

50) CCSL 149 273 lines 38-84, 279 lines 256-65.

51) Mansi 6 656D from Vatican Lat.5845. Munier has omitted this decretum without explanation, CCSL 149 282. See also Gavigan *De vita monastica in Africa septentrionali* 195.

52) VF 27.6-10 (127-9).

53) Religious learning e.g. VF 2.23 (19), 11.3 (61); teaching e.g., 5.21 (33), 24.15 (115); ascetic practices e.g., 5.1 (29), 15.4-11 (79-81).

54) Within Africa, VF 12 (63-5); Sicily VF 8 (47-53); Rome VF 9 (55-7).

55) VF 14.5-8 (73-5).

56) VF 16.7-11 (83-5).

57) Africa, VF 3.1-3 (21); Sicily 8.4-5 (47-9); Sardinia 19.1 (95).

58) D.König *Amt und Askese: Priesteramt und Mönchtum bei den lateinischen Kirchenvätern in vorbenediktinischer Zeit* *Regulae Benedicti* *Studia* 12 (St. Ottilien, 1985) 177-81.

59) VF 27.12-15 (129-31).

60) VF 19.14-15 (95).

61) Cf. VF 27.12 (129), 12.3 (63).

62) VF 17.3 (87) and VF 15 (79-81).

63) VF 11.2 (61), 13.1-4 (67).

64) VF 8.1 (47), 12.1-2 (63), 28.1-2 (135).

- 65) VF 16.12 (85).
- 66) Cf. A.Chastagnol 'Les légats du proconsul d'Afrique au Bas-Empire' *Libya* 6 (1958) 10 and n.18.
- 67) Cyprian *Sententiae Episcoporum* CSEL 3.1 ed. W.Hartel (Vienna, 1868) 435-61. Catacombs are known from Hadrumetum, Sullectum and Tacape which date back to the second century: see G.Leynaud *Les catacombes africaines, Sousse-Hadrumète* 3rd. ed. (Algiers, 1937).
- 68) Lancel 'Province ecclésiastique de Byzacène' 140.
- 69) Lancel 'Province ecclésiastique de Byzacène' 140-1.
- 70) Lancel 'Province ecclésiastique de Byzacène' 142.
- 71) Lancel 'Province ecclésiastique de Byzacène' 146-151.
- 72) CCSL 149 28-30, 47-8; cf. F.L.Cross 'History and fiction in the African canons' *JTS* 12 (1961) 230-1.
- 73) CSEL 149 48-9.
- 74) C.Munier 'La tradition littéraire des canons africains (345-525)' *Recherches Augustiniennes* 10 (1975) 12.
- 75) CSEL 149 261-2.
- 76) See Augustine *Ep.* 59.1, CSEL 34 221-2. Cf. O.Perler *Les voyages de saint Augustin* (Paris, 1969) 243.
- 77) CCSL 149 206 c.86.
- 78) CCSL 149 207 c.89.
- 79) *Gesta* 1.99-1.215, CCSL 149A 96-158. Lancel *Actes* 1 169-176.
- 80) CCSL 149 153-155.
- 81) *Gesta* 1.72, CCSL 149A 91. Lancel *Actes* 1 173-4.
- 82) CCSL 149 261-2.
- 83) E.g. 'correct' order from Council of Carthage 407, CCSL 149 214-5, Council of Carthage 419 CCSL 149 89, 214-5. Other orders:- Council of

- Carthage 418, CCSL 149 69 - Byzacena, Mauretania Sitifensis, Tripolitania, Numidia, Mauretania Caesariensis. Council of Carthage 411 *Gesta Collationis* 1.1 CCSL 149A 53 - Proconsularis, Byzacena, Numidia, Mauretania Sitifensis, Mauretania Caesariensis, Tripolitania.
- 84) *Notitia* (63-71).
- 85) See above 217, 264-7.
- 86) CCSL 149 256 lines 60-65, 258 lines 128-31.
- 87) CCSL 149 256 line 63.
- 88) CCSL 149 261-2 lines 294-300, 304-7.
- 89) CCSL 149 227-8.
- 90) CCSL 149 260 lines 229-241. The following speech of Felix, bishop of Zactara then refers to this question of seniority, CCSL 149 261 lines 254-56, 271-77, after which the first canon to be repeated, and the only one before the recitation of the Nicaean creed, was that concerning the order of the provinces. The language of the Council on the whole is extremely oblique, suggesting that the participants did not wish to be explicit.
- 91) CCSL 149 256-9.
- 92) *Lancel Actes* 1 165.
- 93) See above 41-3.
- 94) See CCSL 149 307-11 - *Concilii Zelensis, Macrianensis, Septimunicensis, Marazanensis (= Maradianensis?), Thenitanum, Thusdritanum*. Cf. F. Maassen *Geschichte der Quellen und der Literatur des canonischen Rechts* 1 (Graz, 1870) 184-5.
- 95) *Rulings of African councils, Ferrandus of Carthage Breviatio Canonum* 16, CCSL 149 288; *Roman directives, Breviatio Canonum* 6, CCSL 149 287, *Maassen Literatur des canonischen Rechts* 1 184.

- 96) *Breviatio Canonum* 220 CCSL 149 305.
- 97) See above 275-6.
- 98) Victor 2.33 (20).
- 99) Victor 2.45 (23).
- 100) Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m.1.1 65.
- 101) Victor 2.52 (25).
- 102) See above 241.
- 103) VF 5.12 (31).
- 104) E.g. Rufinianus, VF 9.3 (55).
- 105) See ch.6 nn.53-4.
- 106) VF 13.10 (69).
- 107) Hasenstab *Studien zu Ennodius* 28-30. Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.497.4, MGH a.a.11 193 states that 'with the death of Gunthamund..., Thrasamund ruled for twenty-seven years and four months and this man full of Arian madness attacked Catholics, closed churches of the Catholics and sent 120 bishops into exile in Sardinia from the whole of Africa'. Hasenstab has taken this to mean that persecution began from the beginning of Thrasamund's reign, though Victor actually appears to be giving a general synopsis of Thrasamund's reign and general religious policy as he did with Huneric in a.479, MGH a.a.11 189-90. However, in support of Hasenstab's interpretation, Victor does refer to the voluntary rebaptism by an Arian bishop Barbas, a.500, MGH a.a.11 193, which might suggest the promotion of Arianism by Thrasamund, cf. Procopius *Wars* 3.8.9 (74, 76).
- 108) VF 13.10 (69).
- 109) E.g. VF 9.1 (55), 18.7 (91), 27.8 (127). See also Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.551, MGH a.a.11 202; a.552, MGH a.a.11 203.

- 110) *Concilium provinciae Byzacenae* CCSL 149 278 lines 234-5; *concilium Numidia* CCSL 149 259 lines 184 and 210, *concilium Caesariensis* CCSL 149 260 line 222. Cf. Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon*, *concilium Numidia*, a.552, MGH a.a.11 202; a.555, MGH a.a.11 204.
- 111) The term *concilium* is used in the conciliar literature of the age of Aurelius to refer to an occasional meeting of bishops either on the local or the 'universal' African level, see *Index Rerum*, CCSL 149 385.
- 112) VF 13.7 (67-9), 13.14 (71), 14.3 (73).
- 113) VF 13.6 (67) cf. 7.13 (43), 17.4 (87) and 21.1 (103).
- 114) VF 6.1 (35), 13.6-7 (67-9), 19.13 (97), Ferrandus *Ep. ad Severum*, PL 67 911A. The spread of the *fama* of a holy person is a commonplace in hagiographical literature, cf. Possidius *Vita Augustini* 5.5 (142), Paulinus *Vita Ambrosii* 25.1 (84), Hilarius *Vita Honorati* 12.3, SC 235 102.
- 115) VF 13.13 (71), Victor 2.8 (15).
- 116) VF 13.16 (71), cf. Victor 2.8 (15) and VF 7.13 (43).
- 117) VF 13.10 (69).
- 118) VF 13.11 (69).
- 119) For this see e.g. CCSL 149 257 lines 86-91, also 207 lines 846-8 from the Council of Milev of 402. Cf. VF 17.6-7 (87-9).
- 120) VF 14.1 (73), 18.7 (91).
- 121) VF 14.10-11, cf. Victor 2.2 (14), 3.67 (57).
- 122) VF 13.9 (69), 14.5-8 (73-5).
- 123) VF 14.1, 4 (73).
- 124) VF 14.2 (73).
- 125) VF 14.12-21 (75-7).
- 126) VF 16.8 (83).

- 127) VF 19.1 (95).
- 128) VF 17.7-8 (87-9), 18.3 (91).
- 129) VF 18.1, cf. 18.2-4 (91).
- 130) *Ep. 15 Episcoporum* 19, CCSL 91A 456 lines 327-331.
- 131) CCSL 91A 458-548, esp. 458 lines 1-5. Fulgentius had copies in his possession of two letters to a certain Stephanian which were purportedly written by the exiled bishops. It seems probable that Fulgentius had written these also on their behalf, *Contra Fastidiosum* 10, CCSL 91 296 lines 453-63.
- 132) VF 18.3, 7 (91).
- 133) VF 18.8 (91-3).
- 134) CCSL 149 281.
- 135) Hilary of Poitiers *Liber ad Constantium* 2, CSEL 65 ed. A. Feder (Vienna, 1916) 197-8.
- 136) Pontius *Vita Cypriani* 12.2 (30-2).
- 137) E.g. Cyprian *Ep. 43*, CSEL 3.2 590-7.
- 138) Ennodius *Ep. 51* MGH a.a. 7 ed. F. Vogel (Berlin, 1885) 68 . Cf. Hasenstab *Studien zu Ennodius* 35-7.
- 139) *Liber Pontificalis* 1 125.
- 140) VF 18.3 (91). Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a. 497.4, MGH a.a. 11 193.
- 141) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a. 505, MGH a.a. 11 194.
- 142) Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m. 1.1 65.
- 143) Cf. Hasenstab *Studien zu Ennodius* 32-5.
- 144) As above n. 109.
- 145) Apart from the *Vita*, see *Ep. Victoris* 4, CCSL 91 279 lines 91-4 and comments of Ferrandus, *Ep. 13 Ferrandi* 3, CCSL 91 387 lines 61-3, *Epistola Parenetica* PL 67 929CD-930A.

146) The only comparable writer that we know of was Vigilus, bishop of Thapsus, to whom a number of writings have been ascribed; Ficker *Studien zu Vigilus* 3-16; M. Simonetti *La Produzione Letteraria Latina fra Romani e Barbari* (sec. V-VIII) Istituto Patristico Augustinianum Sussidi Patristici 3 (Roma, 1986) 42-4. The writings that appear to be his are a couple of anti-Arian dialogues, a work *Contra Eutychetem* and possibly the *Contra Felicianum Arrianum*. However, these do not seem to be responses to specific requests. We do not know anything with any certainty about Vigilus apart from the fact that his name appears last on the Byzacenian list of the *Notitia*, so that he is very likely to have been older than Fulgentius.

147) See n. 130.

148) *Collatio Episcoporum coram rege Gundebaldo*, M.G.H.a.a.6.2 160 lines 14-5. This controversy took place in 499.

149) Augustine *De Fide et Symbolo* CSEL 41 ed. J. Zycha (Vienna, 1900), *Retractiones* 1.16.1, CSEL 36 ed. P. Knöll (Vienna, 1902) 84.

150) See nn. 16 and 17.

151) *Ep. ad Severum* PL 67 910D, 911A, *Epistola Dogmatica* PLS 4 23-4.

152) *Epistola Dogmatica* PLS 4 23-4, *Ep. ad Pelagium et Anatolium*, PL 67 928AB.

153) *De Veritate Praedestinationis et Gratiae* 2.36, 39, 41, CCSL 91A 514, 516-9.

154) E.g. *Ad Monimum* 1.4.1-3, 1.5.1 CCSL 91 5-6. Cf VF 20.9-10 (101).

155) *Ep. ad Pelagium et Anatolium* PL 67 924A, 926D, 927AB. Cf Facundus of Hermiane *Pro Defensione Trium Capitulorum ad Justinianum* 5.7-8, CCSL 90A 157-8, 11.6.5-6, CCSL 90A 349.

156) VF 17.7-9 (87-9), 18.1-4 (91), also 27.19-20 (131). For Fulgentius' support of conciliar decisions in his own words see *Ep.12 ad Ferrandum* 21-2 CCSL 91 374-5.

157) E.g. Ferrandus *Ep. ad Pelagium et Anatolium*, PL 67 923C.

158) Ferrandus *Ep. ad Pelagium et Anatolium* PL 67 927AB; Facundus of Hermiane 6.1.10, CCSL 90A 162-3, 8.7.2-3, CCSL 90A 254.

159) *Ep. Petri Diaconi* 1-13 CCSL 91A 551-7. The answer of the bishops, CCSL 91A 563-624, is normally ascribed to Fulgentius, A. Grillmeier 'Vorbereitung des Mittelalters' *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* ed.

A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht 2 (Würzburg, 1953) 802; B. Mistars *Der Christologie des heiligen Fulgentius von Ruspe* Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie 16 (Münster-in-Westphalia, 1930) 12; W. H. C. Frend *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1972) 244-6.

160) *Ep. Petri Diaconi* 15-28 CCSL 91A 557-62 answered by *Ep.15 Episcoporum* CCSL 91A 448-57 as well as by *De Veritate Praedestinationis*.

161) Eck 'Der Episkopat im spätantike Afrika' 286-95.

162) VF 24.1 (113).

163) VF 25.4 (119) For the Anicii *Epp. ad Proban* CCSL 91 212-229 and 229-235, *Ep. ad Gallan* CCSL 91 197-211. For the Decii, *Ep. ad Theodorum* CCSL 91 240-4. Fulgentius refers to Theodorus as *filius*, CCSL 91 240 line 15. For strong fatherly advice see *Ep. ad Gallan*, 32 CCSL 91 208-9.

164) VF 1.1 (11). See Stevens 'Fulgentius and his Circle' 333.

165) E.g. *Ep. ad Theodorum* CCSL 91 241 lines 51-5.

166) *Ep. Victoris* 5, CCSL 91 279 line 96.

167) Augustine maintained that the sacred writers united eloquence with wisdom *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.6.9 (25-7), CSEL 80 ed. W. M. Green

(Vienna, 1963) 123-4. Such terms found in tandem in reference to Fulgentius; VF 7.5 (41), 12.4 (63), 20.5 (99), 21.5 (103). Separately: *doctrina* VF Preface 2 (5), Preface 22 (9), 14.10 (75), 20.14 (101); *scientia* VF 3.15 (23), 5.16 (31), 8.7 (49), 12.4 (63), 17.5 (87), *Ep. Scarilae* 3, CCSL 91 311-2; *sapientia* VF Preface 9 (7), 8.4 (47) 14.9 (75), 20.15 (101); *peritia*, CCSL 91 279 line 96, *Ep. Scarilae* 1, CCSL 91 311; *eloquentia* VF Preface 2 (5), 7.4 (41), 12.4 (63), 18.8 (91), 21.5 (103). *facundia* VF 7.5 (41), 20.8 (101).

168) Fulgentius' attitude to patristic and conciliar authority is best demonstrated in *Ep.12 ad Ferrandum* 21-2, CCSL 91 374-5, on baptism and *Ep.14 ad Ferrandum* 16-24, CCSL 91 402-16, on the Trinity.

169) See *Index Auctorum*, CCSL 91A 1038-41: Augustine, forty-four citations or reminiscences; Ambrose, ten; Cyprian, ten. For Cyprian's influence on Fulgentius see U.Koch 'La sopravvivenza di Cipriano nell'antica letteratura cristiana: 9) L'epoca vandalica' *Ricerche Religiose* 7 (1933) 506-16.

170) E.g. O.Bardenhewer *Patrology* tr.T.J.Shahan (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1908) 618.

171) On Fulgentius' adoption of Augustine's teaching on predestination and grace, F.Di Sciascio *Fulgenzio di Ruspe. Un grande discepolo di Agostino contro le "Reliquiae Pelagianae pravitatis" nei suoi epigoni* (Rome, 1941) esp. 212-222: C.Tibiletti 'Polemiche in Africa contro i teologi provenzali' *Augustinianum* 26 (1986) 499-517 notes that though Fulgentius followed Augustine closely, he put more of a positive emphasis on man's ability to save himself. On marriage and original sin see A.De Nicola 'Aspetti dell'etica matrimoniale di Fulgenzio di Ruspe' *Augustinianum* 18 (1978) 361-82 and for baptism, J.J.Gavigan 'Fulgentius

of Ruspe on Baptism' *Traditio* 3 (1947) 313-22. Both writers emphasise the influence of Cyprian.

172) On the Trinity, M.Schmaus 'Die Trinitätslehre des Fulgentius von Ruspe' in *Charisteria. Festschrift A.Rzach zum 80. Geburtstag dargebracht* (Reichenburg, 1930) 166-75. On Christology generally, *Misters Christologie des Fulgentius* and C.Micaelli 'Osservazioni sulla cristologia di Fulgenzio di Ruspe' *Augustinianum* 25 (1985) 343-60.

173) Micaelli 'Cristologia di Fulgenzio' demonstrates Fulgentius' contribution towards establishing a correct relation between the unity of the person of Christ and the distinction of the natures in Christ - the flesh of the Word had taken its personal beginning in God the Word, rather than being taken up as a human nature.

174) M.Waldhäuser *Die Kenose und die moderne protestantische Christologie* (Mainz, 1912) 129 quoted by *Misters Christologie des Fulgentius* 62.

175) CCSL 91A 877-85.

176) See A.Isola (ed.) *Fulgenzio di Ruspe, Psalmo contra i ariani vandali* (Rome, 1983) 23-5.

177) CCSL 91 257-73.

178) *Ad Thrasamundum* CCSL 91 97-185.

179) Only surviving in 39 fragments, CCSL 91A 763-866.

180) See J.Beumer 'Zwischen Patristik und Scholastik. Gedanken zum Wesen der Theologie an Hand des Liber de fide ad Petrum des hl. Fulgentius von Ruspe' *Gregorianum* 23 (1942) 326-47 and A.Grillmeier 'Fulgentius von Ruspe, De Fide ad Petrum und die Summa Sententiarum. Eine Studie zum Werden der fröhscholastischen Systematik' *Scholastik* 34 (1959) 526-65.

181) CCSL 91A 711-60.

- 182) For *lectio* see VF 2.23 (19), 12.5 (65), 19.3 (95), 24.13 (115), *Ep. ad Theodorum* 12, CCSL 91 244.
- 183) E.g. VF 2.26 (19), Augustine's *Enarrationes in Ps.36*: 8.1 (47), Cassian's *Institutiones* and *Collationes*.
- 184) Note his superior *scientia*, VF 5.16 (31) and 12.4 (63) and the emphasis on *lectio* n.182.
- 185) See A.Wilmart 'L'odyssée du manuscrit de san Pietro qui renferme les oeuvres de saint Hilaire' in *Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of E.K.Rand* ed.C.V.Jones (New York, 1938) 293-305.
- 186) CCSL 91 IX-X. These notes are attributed to Fulgentius by Wilmart 'Manuscript de san Pietro' 304-5, J.Fraipont CCSL 91 IX.
- 187) *Ep. ad Eugippium* CCSL 91 240.
- 188) *Vita Severini* SC 374. For Severinus, Noricum and the Rugians see E.A.Thompson *Romans and Barbarians: The Decline of the Western Empire* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1982) 113-33.
- 189) *Eugippius Excerpta ex Operibus Augustini: Epistula ad Probam* CSEL 9.1 ed. P.Knöll (Vienna, 1885) 1-4.
- 190) CCSL 91A 1047.
- 191) E.g. *Ep. ad Gallam* CCSL 91 198-9, *Ad Monimum* Prologue 1, CCSL 91 1.
- 192) Proba was from the line of the Anicii (PLRE Proba 1 907) cf.n.163. On Monimus' erudition see *Ad Monimum* 1.3.1-4.3 CCSL 91 4-6.
- 193) *Ep. ad Donatum* 1, CCSL 91 257.
- 194) E.g. VF Preface 21 (9), 7.4-6 (41), 8.8 (49), 14.10 (75), 18.3 (91), 19.9 (95), 20-21 (101-7), 24.15 (115).
- 195) E.g.VF 6.2-4 (35), 19.9-12 (95-7), 20.6-14 (99-101).
- 196) As n.195, also VF 23.1 (111). Fulgentius can also be seen doing this in his own writings, e.g. *Ep.3 ad Probam* 36, CCSL 91 228, *De*

- Remissione Peccatorum* 1.17.1, CCSL 91A 665, *Sermo* 3.5, CCSL 91A 908; cf. A. Isola 'Sulla Struttura dei *Sermones* di Fulgenzio di Ruspe' *Quaderni dell'Istituto di lingua e letteratura latina* 2.3 (1980-1) 43.
- 197) VF 6.3 (35), 20.11 (101).
- 198) VF 19.9 (95), 20.7-8 (99-101), 24.15 (115).
- 199) VF 23.1 (111).
- 200) Cf. VF 22 (109).
- 201) VF 22.3-6 (109).
- 202) VF 18.2, 8 (91), 25.9 (121), 27.25 (133).
- 203) VF Preface 12 (7).
- 204) VF Preface 9 (7). Note for instance *Responsiones Fulgentii*, CCSL 91A 86 line 583: *absque contentione studio veritas audiatur*. Fulgentius certainly expected people other than the addressee to read his works; e.g. *De Remissione Peccatorum* 1.2.2, CCSL 91A 650.
- 205) *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.12.27 (74-6), CSEL 80 137-8, 4.17.34 (96), CSEL 80 143.
- 206) E.g. VF Preface 3 (5), 5.21-2 (33), 20.7, 11 (101), 23.1 (111).
- 207) E.g. VF 19.9-12 (95-7), 20.14-5 (101), 27.26-7 (133).
- 208) *Ep. 2 ad Gallam* 31, CCSL 91 208. See n.245.
- 209) CCSL 91A 649-707.
- 210) CCSL 91 257-73.
- 211) CCSL 91A 633-46.
- 212) E.g. *Ep. Victoris* 1, CCSL 91 277; *Ad Monimum* 1.3.1-5, CCSL 91 4-5; *Ep. ad Optatum* 1, CCSL 91 189; *Ep. Scarilae* 1-4, CCSL 91 311-2; *Ep. 14 Ferrandi* 1-2, CCSL 91 385-6.
- 213) *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.12.27-8 (74-7), CSEL 80, 137-8.
- 214) *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.10.24-11.26 (64-73), CSEL 80 135-7.

- 215) E.g. *Ad Monimum* 3.5.1-8, CCSL 91 58-60; *Ep. ad Scarilam* 40, CCSL 91 345-6; *Sermo* 5.3, CCSL 91A 920-1.
- 216) *Ep. ad Scarilae* 3, CCSL 91 311-2.
- 217) E.g. *Contra Fabianum* 29.9, CCSL 91A 819, *Ep. ad Faustinum* 4, CCSL 91A 628-9; *Contra Fastidiosum* 22, CCSL 91 308.
- 218) VF 19.9 (95), 25.3 (119), *Contra Fastidiosum* 18.2, CCSL 91 303; *Ad Thrasamundum* 1.20.3, CCSL 91 119 lines 895-7; *Ad Monimum* 3.2.2-3, CCSL 91 53; *Psalmus Abecedarius contra Arianos* 84-5, CCSL 91A 879; *De Remissione Peccatorum* 1.16.4, CCSL 91A 665.
- 219) *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.20.42 (118-120), CSEL 80 151-2. Cf. 4.20.40, CSEL 80, 148-50.
- 220) *Ad Thrasamundum* 1.20.1-2, CCSL 91 118-9.
- 221) B.de Margerie 'Analyse "structurale" d'un texte de saint Fulgence de Ruspe sur l'incarnation, extrait de *Ad Trasamundum* I, xx, 1-2' *REAug* 22 (1976) 90-4.
- 222) De Margerie 'Analyse "structurale"' 94. Micaelli 'Cristologia di Fulgenzio', see n.173.
- 223) CCSL 91 283-308.
- 224) CCSL 91A 763-866.
- 225) VF 21.17 (107).
- 226) VF 6.3 (35), 21.14-5 (105-7).
- 227) E.g. VF 7.2-6 (41), 19.11 (97).
- 228) VF 27.27 (133).
- 229) VF 27.26 (133).
- 230) *Ep. ad Donatum*, CCSL 91 257 lines 10-13.
- 231) VF 7.4-5 (41), 20.8, 13 (101).
- 232) CCSL 91 279 line 74.

- 233) *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.25.55-26.56 (142-8), CSEL 80 162-4.
- 234) 4.28.61 (155-8), CSEL 80 166-7.
- 235) 4.12.28 (76-7), CSEL 80 138; 4.26.56 (145-8), CSEL 80 166-7.
- 236) 4.20.40 (111-4), CSEL 80 148-50; cf. 4.7.11-13 (31-43), CSEL 80 124-8.
- 237) E.g. *Sermo* 3.5, CCSL 91A 908, *Sermo* 1.13, CCSL 91A 895-6.
- 238) *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.22.51 (134-5), CSEL 80 159-60.
- 239) *Ad Thrasamundum* 1.2.2, CCSL 91 99.
- 240) *Ep. ad Theodorum* 3, CCSL 91 241.
- 241) *Sermo* 3.1, CCSL 91A 905.
- 242) See e.g. M.P. Ciccarese 'La tipologia delle lettere di S. Agostino' *Augustinianum* 11 (1971) 503-7. For the use of panegyric language in relation to saints see Isola 'Sermones di Fulgenzio' 40-3 and V. Loi 'Struttura e «topoi» del panegyrico classico nei «sermones de sanctis» di S. Agostino' *Augustinianum* 14 (1974) 591-604.
- 243) *Ep. ad Eugippium* e.g. 1-3, CCSL 91 235-6.
- 244) E.g. *Ep. 3 ad Probam* 25, CCSL 91 222-3, *Ep. 4 ad Probam* 2, CCSL 91 230.
- 245) Ferrandus' *Ep. 13 Ferrandi* speaks of an *epistula de oratione*, a copy of which he had lost track of because it was so popular; CCSL 91 387. This appears to be the same work on prayer to which Fulgentius refers addressed to Proba (*Ep. ad Gallam* 31, CCSL 91 208). This letter would appear to be *Ep. 4 ad Probam* since prayer is the subject of this letter. Fraipont agrees with this argument, CCSL 91 VI n. 12. Cf. VF 25.5 (119).
- 246) See n. 234.
- 247) *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.16.33 (90-5), CSEL 80 141-3. *Ep. ad Eugippium* 5, CCSL 91 237 line 79.

248) See nn.203, 204.

249) See Stevens 'Circle of Fulgentius' 329-37.

250) VF 27.25 (133); cf. Isidore of Seville *De Viris Illustribus* 27, PL 83 1098A.

251) Cf. *Sermo* 1.1-3, CCSL 91A 889-91.

252) E.g. *Ad Monimum* 1.1.1-2, CCSL 91 3; *Ep.3 ad Proban* 1, CCSL 91 212 lines 14-16; *De Fide ad Petrum* 2, CCSL 91A 712 lines 22-5.

253) See further 332.

254) *Ep.13 Ferrandi* 2, CCSL 91 386 lines 52-4.

255) *Ep.ad Optatum* 1, CCSL 91 189; *De Fide ad Petrum* 87, CCSL 91A 760.

256) *Ep.ad Optatum* 1, CCSL 91 189; *Ep. ad Gallan* 31, 208 line 430.

257) Unless we can include the letter of Possessor, an African bishop in exile in Constantinople in 520, to Pope Hormisdas, asking how he should respond to questions from the Scythian monks about certain sayings of Faustus, bishop of Riez, no doubt the same ones as were asked of Fulgentius, *Collectio Avellana Ep.230*, CSEL 35 695-6.

258) There are no African correspondents known from the letter collections of Ruricius of Limoges and Avitus of Vienne and the only possible African addressed in the letters of Ennodius of Pavia apart from the exiled bishops (see n.138) was Venantius Opilio who certainly had African relatives, *Ep.150*, MGH a.a.7 143.

259) Cf. Brown *Augustine of Hippo* 412, for the example of deacon Quodvultdeus, who would only seek the opinion of his fellow-countryman, Augustine for information on all the heresies; in Brown's words, Quodvultdeus 'seems to represent the dangers of a stagnant and self-satisfied provincial culture, hiding under a great name: good 'African

bread' was all he needed'. For the reference to African bread, Augustine
Ep. 223.3, CSEL 57 451

260) See Grillmeier 'Vorbereitung des Mittelalters' 802-3. Wistern
Christologie des Fulgentius 81, 93-4.

261) *Collectio Avellana* Ep. 227, CSEL 35 693.

262) Cf. Frend *Rise of the Monophysite Movement* 266-9.

263) Ep.15 *Episcoporum* 18-19, CCSL 91A 456. Cf. VF 25.6-7 (119-121), the
Vita tells us this was well-known to all people.

264) The earliest MSS of the *Vita* are Paris BN lat.1796 (9th c.),
Vatican Reginensis 590 (9th c.), Troyes Bibl. Munic. 1248 (9th c.),
Leningrad Fvl (9th-10th c.), see VF VII-XIX. The earliest of Fulgentius'
work are Vatican Reginensis 267 (6th c.), Leningrad Q.v.I.No.7 (6-7th
c.)Paris BN Lat.1796 (8th c.), Rome Bibl. Naz. 1006 (8-9th c.), Paris BN
Lat. 12234 (9th c.), Troyes, Bibl. Munic. 2405 (9th c.), Vatican
Reginensis 590 (9-10th c.).

265) VF 20-1 (99-107). Cf. Fraipont CCSL 91 vi-vii.

266) CCSL 91 71-94 and 97-185.

267) *Laterculus Regum Vandalorum* (Augiensis) 10, MGH a.a.13 459; John
Malalas *Chronographia* 15, 389; Jordanes *Getica* 291-2, MGH a.a.5.1 133;
John of Antioch 214.4, 6-7, FHG 4 620-1.

268) See Frend *Rise of the Monophysite Movement* 190-233.

269) Before, VF 5.12 (31); after, a letter of pope Gelasius I dated to
February 496, *Collectio Avellana* Ep. 95.63, CSEL 35 391, cf. P.Courcelle
'Sur quelques textes littéraires relatifs aux grandes invasions' *Revue
Belge de philologie et d'histoire* 31 (1953) 34.

270) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.497.4; see n.107. On Thrasamund's religious policy see also Courtois 266-8, H.-J.Diesner 'Das Auswirkungen der Religionspolitik Thrasamunds und Hilderichs auf Ostgoten und Byzantiner' *Sitzungsberichte der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig. Philologische-historische Klasse* Band 113 Heft 3 (Berlin, 1967) 3-23.

271) Cf. Diesner *Fulgentius als Theologe* 21. It is noticeable that in Gelimer's reign in 533, the officer in charge of Sardinia could declare himself independent from Gelimer and from the Emperor Justinian and dress as a king, Procopius *Wars* 3.10.25-34 (98, 100).

272) Procopius *Wars* 3.8.11-13 (76). For their use on the frontier see H.-J. Diesner 'Grenzen und Grenzverteidigung des Vandalenreiches' in *Studi in onore di Edoardo Volterra* (Milan, 1971) 3 481-90.

273) Procopius *Wars* 3.8.13-4 (76). This relationship receives some support from the probability that it is one of Thrasamund's gold coins on which Anastasius' bust appears on the reverse. See W.Wroth *Catalogue of the coins of the Vandals, Ostrogoths and Lombards and of the Empires of Thessalonica, Nicaea and Trebizond in the British Museum* (London, 1911) 10.

274) Procopius *Wars* 3.8.9 (74, 76).

275) Procopius *Wars* 3.8.10-11 (76); Fulgentius *Psalmus Abecedarius contra Arianos* 241-2 CCSL 91A 883.

276) VF 20.1 (99).

277) CCSL 91A 877-85, e.g.236-40, 883.

278) *Ep. Victoris* 4, CCSL 91 278.

279) Fulgentius *Ad Thrasamundum* 1.2.1-2, CCSL 91 99; Cassiodorus *Variae* 5.43, MGH a.a.12 170 lines 18-19; *Anthologia Latina* 210, 1 179-80; 213,

- 1 181; 376, 1 288-9. Cf. the interest of the Frankish king Chilperic in Trinitarian debate, Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 5.44, MGH s.r.m.1.1 236-7.
- 280) VF 20.1-4 (99).
- 281) Victor 2.45 (23).
- 282) VF 19.13 (97), 20.5-6 (99).
- 283) VF 20.2 (99).
- 284) VF 20.1 (99).
- 285) VF 21.6, 8 (103).
- 286) Cf. also *Anthologia Latina* 210, 1 179 line 7. See above 215-7.
- 287) VF 21.8 (103), 21.14-15 (105-7).
- 288) VF 21.4 (103).
- 289) VF 21.5 (103).
- 290) VF 21.4 (103).
- 291) VF 21.4 (103).
- 292) Diesner 'Religionspolitik Thrasamunds und Hilderichs' 13. See also V. Ensslin art. *Thrasamund*, *RE* Band 6A1 (Stuttgart, 1936) 558.
- 293) Stein *Histoire du Bas-Empire* 2 223-35. Frend *Rise of the Monophysite Movement* 233-54.
- 294) *Collectio Avellana* Ep. 212, CSEL 35 670-1.
- 295) See A.A. Vasiliev *Justin the First: An Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great* (Harvard, 1950) 339-40.
- 296) Victor 1.51 (13), 2.3-4 (14), 3.32 (48).
- 297) E.g. *Anthologia Latina* 215, 1 182-3.
- 298) Victor 3.19 (44).

- 299) Procopius *Vars* 3.9.5 (84). Hilderic seems to have stayed in Constantinople with Justinian not long before his succession, see Courtois 268 n.2.
- 300) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* 523.2, MGH a.a.11 197.
- 301) Cf. n.300.
- 302) VF 21.20-1 (107).
- 303) Procopius *Vars* 3.8.15-29 (76-82). Procopius concludes his account of Thrasamund's reign with this defeat by Cabaon; see Courtois 350.
- 304) Procopius *Vars* 3.8.17-9, 21-2 (78, 80).
- 305) Procopius *Vars* 3.8.20 (78, 80).
- 306) VF 21.17 (107). See above 325-6.
- 307) VF 21.14-15 (105-7).
- 308) VF 7.9-10 (43), 7.16-17 (45), 20.15 (101), 21.18-20 (107).
- 309) See n.130.
- 310) VF 20.7-8 (101); *Ad Monimum* Prologue, CCSL 91 2 lines 69-74; *Ad Monimum* 1.3.3, CCSL 91 4-5.
- 311) VF 21.3 (103).
- 312) CCSL 91 71-94.
- 313) See *Index Auctorum* CCSL 91A 1045.
- 314) VF 21.4, 6 (103).
- 315) Cf. 1.2.2, CCSL 91 99.
- 316) *Collatio Episcoporum coram Rege Gundebaldo* MGH a.a.6.2, 162 lines 41-2.
- 317) *Ad Thrasamundum* 1.1.1, CCSL 91 97 lines 4-11.
- 318) *Ad Thrasamundum* 1.1.1, CCSL 91 97 lines 11-20.
- 319) CCSL 91 97-185.
- 320) VF 21.11.14 (105).

- 321) VF 21.14-15 (105-7).
- 322) VF 21.17-18 (107).
- 323) VF 25.1 (119).
- 324) Eugenius, Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m.1.1 62-3; Cyprian, e.g. *Epp.*17, 38-40, CSEL 3.2 521-3, 579-86.
- 325) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.505, MGH a.a.11 194. No mention is made of any replacement in any source, see VF 26.5 (123) and Maier 95.
- 326) VF 18.2 (91).
- 327) VF 26.2-18 (123-5).
- 328) See n.254.
- 329) VF 26.17 (125).
- 330) VF 27.27 (133). See n.327.
- 331) VF 27.2 (127).
- 332) VF 27.27 (133) shows that Fulgentius' popularity spread into Proconsularis. VF 6.1 (35) suggests Fulgentius also became well-known in western Proconsularis.
- 333) Fulgentius did not appear at the Council of Carthage in 525, CCSL 149 271-2. At the Council of Iunci in 523, he was offered a position of precedence, but when the bishop Quodvultdeus, disputed his right to it, Fulgentius turned down the position at the following Byzacenian council at Sufes, VF 27.19-23 (131-3).
- 334) *Contra Fabianum*, CCSL 91A 763-866, *Contra Fastidiosum*, CCSL 91 283-308.
- 335) *Ep.*12 *ad Ferrandum*, CCSL 91 362-81, *Ep.*14 *ad Ferrandum*, CCSL 91 387-444.

- 336) Gennadius *De Viris Illustribus* 78, 102-3 tells us that Victor of Cartenna wrote a book against the Arians which he offered to Gaiseric. Unfortunately this does not survive.
- 337) 1.2.2, CCSL 91 99 lines 94-97.
- 338) 1.2.2, CCSL 91 99 lines 98-101.
- 339) See e.g. *Anthologia Latina* 210-214, 1 179-82 and 376, 1 288-9 and Chalon et al '*Memorable factum*' esp. 214-222. Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths was also portrayed in this light, e.g. *Excerpta Valesiana* 70, 20, Cassiodorus *Chronicon* a.500, MGH a.a.11 160.
- 340) 1.2.2, CCSL 91 99 lines 103-7.
- 341) *De Veritate Praedestinationis* 2.39 CCSL 91A 516-7.
- 342) *De Civitate Dei* 5.24, CCSL 47 160.
- 343) 1.2.1, CCSL 91 99 lines 77-9.
- 344) 1.2.2, CCSL 91 99 lines 83-90.
- 345) 1.3.1, CCSL 91 99 lines 108-112.
- 346) 1.3.1, CCSL 91 99-100 lines 112-134.
- 347) E.g. 1.3.2, CCSL 91 100 lines 134-143.
- 348) Avitus *Collatio coram rege Gundebaldo*, MGH a.a.6.2 162.
- 349) 1.1.2 CCSL 91 97 lines 20-23.
- 350) 1.1.2 CCSL 91 97 lines 23-29. Cf. Avitus *Contra Arrianos*, MGH a.a.6.2 1 lines 25-9.
- 351) 1.1.3 CCSL 91 98 lines 44-46.
- 352) 1.1.3, 1.2.1 CCSL 91 98 lines 47-49 and 69-72.
- 353) 1.1.3 CCSL 91 98 lines 48-9.
- 354) 1.1.3-4 CCSL 91 98 lines 56-9.
- 355) 1.1.4 CCSL 91 98 lines 59-5.
- 356) *Ep. ad Donatum* 2, CCSL 91 258 lines 42-8.

- 357) *Ep ad Severum* PL 67 911B. Cf. also Possidius' *Vita Augustini* 6.3 (144), 9.1 (150).
- 358) 1.1.4 CCSL 91 98 lines 65-8.
- 359) *Facundus Pro Defensione* 4.4.17, CCSL 90A 126.
- 360) Ambrose *Ep.* 40.2 (1a), CSEL 82.3 ed. M. Zelzer (Vienna, 1982) 162-3; *Ep.* 57.4, CSEL 82.3 207.
- 361) Victor 1.22 (6).
- 362) Cf., e.g. Victor 2.31 (20).
- 363) VF 21.16 (107).
- 364) E.g. Monimus, n. 310 and Ferrandus, n. 7-9.

CHAPTER 8

Consolidation and conflict: the African Catholic Church, 523-553

The Council of Carthage of 525 is well worth investigating. The concern of its members was to correct the widespread problems that had arisen as a consequence of the Catholic Church's inability to maintain discipline within its ranks in the face of the handicaps and obstructions that resulted from Vandal rule. Hence our knowledge of some of the preoccupations and problems of the African Catholic Church is corroborated, while some other suspicions are confirmed. The council also makes clear the high regard in which present, but particularly past conciliar authority was held. We have seen this before in connection with the *concilium Byzacenum* and it is clear that this attitude had not disappeared in the Vandal period, though this was apparently the first general African council since 427.' At the same time such an attitude looks forward to the Three Chapters controversy in which African churchmen became heavily embroiled.

The Council of Carthage also adumbrates divisions over authority and precedence between local churches which, as we have already seen, have undergone different experiences under the Vandals. The Council of Carthage thus makes clear many of the developments in the Catholic Church in the preceding period whilst giving us pointers to future developments, at the same time filling us in on many of the elements of continuity from the past to the present and future. A consideration of

this council will therefore provide a suitable finale to this investigation of the African Catholic Church under the Vandals.

With the accession of King Hilderic in 523, a new, but short-lived, phase in the history of the relations between the Vandal king and the African Catholic Church began. We know little about the Catholic Church under Hilderic's successor Gelimer,² who succeeded in 530, but in 533 the Byzantine invasion led to the defeat of the Vandals and the beginning of the political control of Africa from Constantinople, the suppression of the Arians in Africa and official support for the Catholic Church.

In 523, Hilderic departed from the policies of his predecessors. The exiled bishops were allowed to return from exile. New elections were allowed for the vacant sees, including a new bishop for Carthage, Bonifatius.³ Provincial councils were held.⁴ We have evidence of church-building or rebuilding from this period.⁵ The king even appears to have assisted in the logistics of calling the bishops to the general council at Carthage.⁶ However, even if churches were returned to Catholic congregations, many must still have been retained by Arians, such as that dedicated to Cyprian at Carthage.⁷ The church of St. Agileus near the port seems to have become the Catholic cathedral, suggesting that the *basilica Faustī*, seized by Huneric, was still held by the Arians.⁸ The need for Fulgentius to argue against Arians such as Fastidiosus and Fabianus would seem to show that they were still a force to be reckoned with.⁹ There is no evidence that Hilderic himself abandoned the traditional Vandal Arianism which his father had tried so

hard to promote. He may have felt it politic to continue to observe the religion of the Vandal people while allowing the Catholics to act freely.

Probably the greatest potential means towards the reconstruction of the African Catholic Church was the general council held in the basilica of St. Agileus in Carthage in February 525.¹⁰ This was intended to bring representatives from all provinces of the Church together in order to reassert their common identity and reestablish ecclesiastical discipline by the reiteration of the canons and to reinforce their common belief through the repetition of the Nicaean Creed. However, the lack of official representatives from Byzacena served only to make explicit differences within the Catholic Church which may have been long-standing. This absence also seems to have lessened the authority of the council, at least in the eyes of some. It is significant that at the Council of Carthage 535, Felicianus, Fulgentius' successor as bishop of Ruspe, sought from this later council confirmation of the freedom of the monastery of Ruspe from episcopal control such as the Council of 525 had sought generally for monasteries and especially for that of abbat Petrus. Felix, bishop of Zattara in Numidia, who had been at the earlier council, stated at the Council of 535 that those things which had been enacted at the Council of 525 remained in force.¹¹ For a bishop from Byzacena like Felicianus there may have been some ignorance about and disregard for the Council of 525 and its validity.

These differences between the bishop of Carthage and the bishops of Byzacena will be dealt with in the second section of this chapter.

The first section will investigate the aim of restoring order and discipline within the Church and what this tells us about the problems which had developed within the Church in the Vandal period. This will be done mainly by considering the canons that Bonifatius had repeated at the council.

a) The Council of Carthage 525: the reestablishment of Church discipline and the legacy of the Vandal period

In 525 Bonifatius had the problem of restoring 'the vigour of the holy canons' which Aurelius, bishop of Carthage, had instituted.¹² He clearly wished to gloss over the gap in the episcopal college created by the absence of all but one Byzacenian bishop,^{12a} rather apologetically stating that seeking the truth should not be thought to depend upon the number of those gathered and quoting from Matthew 18:20, 'Wherever two or three are gathered together there shall I be'.¹³ This text was one of the main Scriptural foundations for conciliar authority and for the idea of the reception of divine authority at council gatherings.¹⁴

However, the number attending a council was not irrelevant to its authority.¹⁵ This was particularly so considering the emphasis that was put upon 'inculcating in the minds of individuals the institution of the laws of our fathers newly sanctioned, so that the knowledgeable should serve what before they had learned and that the less instructed should learn to know what they did not'.¹⁶ This was particularly aimed at those recently promoted to the episcopal office.¹⁷ However, although

all provinces except that of Byzacena were represented by official legates, there were still only sixty-one bishops present.¹⁸ This is not a large number compared to the 214 who attended the Council of Carthage of 418¹⁹ and the 220 who attended the Council of Carthage in 535.²⁰

Naturally, most bishops attending the Council of 525 came from the surrounding and dependent province of Proconsularis. However, bishops from Proconsularis only numbered forty-five.²¹ This is less than the fifty-four bishops from Proconsularis mentioned in the *Notitia*, which portrayed the situation in a period of persecution. The Council of Carthage of 411 had registered at least eighty-seven Catholic bishoprics (possibly up to 102) as well as another twenty-two Donatist only bishoprics which were probably absorbed into the Catholic Church soon after.²² There may be a number of reasons why the attendance of bishops from Proconsularis was relatively low at a time when in the absence of any councils for a century it was important that they should attend, especially considering their relative proximity to Carthage. However, given the fact that peace had returned to the Catholic Church now for eighteen months - enough time to choose bishops - it may be that it was still difficult to reestablish Catholic bishoprics in the region of the *sortes Vandalarum*, where the Arian Church could still thrive. Considering the difficulties that the Catholic Church in Proconsularis had undergone in the previous three generations, it would not be surprising if the Church in this region experienced problems in reestablishing itself.

The bishops at the Council emphasised the common suffering of all the African Church,²³ glossing over the variation in the experiences of different regions. The churches in Mauretania, and at times in Numidia and Byzacena, may have been as much preoccupied with their relations with the Moorish peoples as with the Vandals.²⁴ The bishops also emphasised the fact that the bishops of Carthage had feared to promote ecclesiastical discipline and were not able to prevent the excesses of transgressors.²⁵ For this reason there was felt to be particular importance in reiterating the canons, since they had long been suppressed and hence it was necessary to inform all bishops of them.

After the recitation of the Nicæan Creed, it was stated that correct belief was not enough: 'we should know the institutions of ecclesiastical discipline so that an incorrect observation should not clash with correct belief, since faith should be decorated with good behaviour, nor can anyone be a wholesome preacher of religion unless he is also a most careful observer of rules'.²⁶ This admonition was probably timely. The necessary emphasis upon correct belief in the choice of bishops and clergy when the threat to the Catholic faith had been particularly serious in previous reigns had meant that less priority could be given to ecclesiastical discipline. Given the exigencies of the time, various forms of laxity no doubt had to be tolerated.

Canons were then cited from the Carthaginian archives, which had clearly remained intact.²⁷ Bonifatius seems to have selected only

certain canons to be recited. Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage, around this time or a little later compiled a larger collection of 232 canons,²⁸ taking them from general councils of the period before the Vandal invasion and from the time of Aurelius, with a few earlier ones, thus reflecting the prevailing backward-looking attitude which we see expressed elsewhere. Bonifatius had recited African canons of the time of Aurelius (as well as one from the Council of Carthage of 390 and a few from the Council of Nicaea).²⁹ Citing only fifty canons, Bonifatius was clearly being selective, so that, as well as some canons of general concern, many of those chosen must have reflected major preoccupations within the Church at the time and have been relevant to contemporary disciplinary problems arising from the persecutions and the inability to maintain internal order.

One of Bonifatius' major concerns was to stress the prerogatives of the see of Carthage. So those canons were repeated which stated that the bishop of Carthage should pass onto provincial primates the date of Easter each year; that whenever a primate succeeded, the bishop of Carthage should be informed; also that primates should send the names of bishops in their provinces who had died or succeeded.³⁰ Such communications must have fallen into abeyance with the absence of a bishop of Carthage and have been difficult at times of exile and restriction of the movement of Catholic clergy, though the compilation of the *Notitia* was no doubt the result of the last of these prerogatives.³¹ These measures also demonstrate the subordination of the other primates to the bishop of Carthage, a point of concern to Bonifatius. Other prerogatives of the bishop of Carthage were that he

could dictate and subscribe in the name of all bishops' measures which were accepted in council.³² Indeed, we have no cases of objections to measures introduced to councils by bishops of Carthage. They wielded a very great influence in council.³³ Finally, the bishop of Carthage could translate and promote clerics from one see to another, since in the words of Aurelius of Carthage, 'I uphold the care of all churches'.³⁴ These were all prerogatives created or confirmed under Aurelius of Carthage.

Another subject about which several of the canons selected were concerned was the insubordination of clergy. At the highest level, the canon from the Council of Milev stating that bishops should not put themselves before those prior to them was topical.³⁵ Bonifatius also repeated that bishops of the first sees (primates) should not be called *princeps* or *summus sacerdos*,³⁶ perhaps a snub aimed at Liberatus, the primate of Byzacena who had refused to come to the Council of Carthage. Another canon repeated stated that if any bishop was a rebel and did not wish to go to council he should lose his diocese.³⁷ Though the original canon of the Council of Hippo of 397 seems to have referred specifically to a council called to judge a specific case,³⁸ this was not made explicit and the repetition of the canon may have been a threat to those who, like Liberatus and his Byzacenian colleagues, had not come to the council. It was also suggested that bishops should not easily go abroad.³⁹ We hear of African bishops fleeing abroad from the time of Augustine's letter written at the beginning of the Vandal invasion in 430.⁴⁰ That this had been a real problem during times of persecution was mentioned in a letter of the Council of 535 to the bishop of Rome, where

it is stated that some bishops had gone abroad leaving their people *sine causa*. This had long been tolerated because of the violence of the time, but should now be disciplined.⁴¹

Bonifatius also clearly felt it important to repeat the canons of the Council of Carthage of 401 ruling the conduct of bishops who were *interventores*, that is those who looked after a diocese which was vacant. One law stated that a new bishop should be elected to the vacant see within a year of the creation of the vacancy, otherwise a new *interventor* should be provided. Another law ruled that *interventores* should not sit more than once in the cathedra of the same people.⁴² Clearly, with many bishops exiled and new elections prevented at various times in the Vandal period, the episcopal role of *interventor* was open to abuse and might lead to the permanent extension of influence by such bishops over neighbouring sees. This seems to be corroborated by the repetition of another canon which stated that a diocese which had a bishop should not claim other dioceses for itself.⁴³ Those dioceses without bishops might be vulnerable to the claims of those which did have them. There was a case mentioned by the bishops of Byzacena where Vincentius, bishop of Girba in Tripolitania seems to have taken over some of the population in the *territorium* of Tamallumi in Byzacena.⁴⁴ This then, was clearly a topical matter. Connected with it was the repetition of the canon stating that no one should take over the clergy of another bishop.⁴⁵ This canon may have been in the mind of bishop Faustus when he made Fulgentius a priest.⁴⁶

Some canons deal with the insubordination of clerics in general. For instance proud clerics should be coerced.⁴⁷ We can understand that a general laxity in clerical discipline would have prevailed in difficult times, despite such attempts to bring offenders into line, such as the letters which Fulgentius wrote for his fellow exiled bishops from Sardinia.⁴⁸ It was ordered that clerics should not stay in another town without a reason.⁴⁹ Clerical mobility could lead to the neglect of duty. At the same time it must sometimes have been necessary to maintain the network of communication between local churches. Other repeated canons corrected irregular ordinations. Clergy and virgins should not be consecrated before the age of twenty-five⁵⁰ and no one should be ordained without the examination of the bishop and the witness of the people.⁵¹ Irregular ordinations may have been expedient in times of difficulty. Another repeated canon stated that priests should not designate virgins or perform baptism.⁵² We know that priests had actually performed baptism in Africa in the Vandal period⁵³ and this was clearly done under the force of necessity in consideration of the absence of bishops. Bonifatius now wanted to put a stop to this irregular practice also.

The administration of baptism was, of course essential for the continuation of the Catholic Church. It was doubly important, in that it defined a Catholic, since it was done in the name of the Trinity and also in that its validity was challenged by the Arians who felt it necessary to rebaptise converts. Its importance, particularly in the face of the Arian challenge to Catholic baptism, seems to be supported by the repetition of canons concerned with the correct application of

baptism. For instance, it was stated that the dead should not be baptised⁵⁴ but that in doubtful cases where no witnesses can be found to confirm that they are certainly baptised, children should be baptised.⁵⁵ Finally, if sick people cannot reply for themselves, they should be baptised when, near to death, they have indicated their wish to witnesses.⁵⁶ This was a concern that Ferrandus had already brought up in a letter to Fulgentius around the time of the Council.⁵⁷

Other repeated canons demonstrate a concern for the maintenance of the integrity and identity of the Catholic Church, which had been and still was challenged by the existence of the Arians and by the social mixing of Catholics and Arians. The canons were originally aimed against the practice of mixing with Donatists and pagans. For instance, it was stated that the rebaptised should not be ordained⁵⁸ and that no one should be ordained unless they had made all their family Catholics.⁵⁹ Also, bishops and clerics should only give away their property to Catholics⁶⁰ and the daughters of bishops and clerics should not marry pagans or heretics.⁶¹

Finally, another group of canons shows that Bonifatius was concerned to reestablish and reassert the judicial autonomy of the African province. Both the holding of the council itself and the reiteration of the canons demonstrated the renewed ability of the African Catholic Church to keep its own house in order. The following canons were a hint that outside help was not needed in settling the affairs of African Church unless it was requested from the Church itself in matters beyond its competence, according to the conception of

authority which seems to have prevailed before the Vandal invasion. The African Catholic Church as a whole may still have been smarting from the imposition of penitential measures by Felix III, bishop of Rome on African clerics who had given way to threats and inducements and rebaptised at the time of Huneric's persecution, when the African Church was not in a position to maintain its own discipline.⁶²

Hence a canon of the Council of Carthage of 424 was reiterated, stating that no one should dare appeal to the Roman Church.⁶³ It was also stated that whoever sought a public judgement from the emperor and not an episcopal one should be deprived of his ecclesiastical honour.⁶⁴ Anyone who thought of appealing abroad should not have communion with anyone within Africa, while anyone who does not have communion in Africa, if he dares do so abroad, would be damned.⁶⁵ The council was, then very insistent on this matter of appeals.

Thus the canons repeated at the Council can safely be considered to reveal many of the major problems and preoccupations of the leadership of the African Church at the time, reflecting practices that had developed in the Church during the Vandal period.

b) The differences between Carthage and Byzacena

Perhaps the greatest immediate disciplinary concern of the council concerned a specific case of insubordination. It has been argued that a conflict over precedence was one of the reasons behind the boycotting of

the Council of Carthage by the primate of Byzacena, Liberatus, and other bishops from this province.⁶⁶ This was also, no doubt, related to the reassertion of the rights and privileges of the see of Carthage which was heavily emphasised at the Council by the new bishop, Bonifatius. The aim can be seen as part of a general restoration of the hierarchy and discipline of the Catholic Church and the reinforcement of the canons of that Church as they had been in the great age of Aurelius. However, the emphasis on the privileges of the see of Carthage was also a response to a perceived threat of insubordination by those wishing to put themselves before others who should be before them in precedence. The latter was considered to be a matter of great seriousness and one of the main reasons for calling the council.⁶⁷ The 'indiscrete equality' which Bonifatius feared,⁶⁸ supposedly arising from the claim that the seniority of all bishops should be taken together and not province by province according to the provincial order, did affect the privileges of the see of Carthage. It challenged Bonifatius' conception of the right order of precedence and diminished the supposed precedence of the bishops of Proconsularis because it was the first province in order, of which the Church of Carthage was the head and mother Church.⁶⁹

We know of another case which might have been construed as insubordination, when a bishop Quodvultdeus objected to bishop Fulgentius being placed before him in precedence at the Byzacenian Council of Iunci. The author of the *Vita*, the only source, takes pains to point out that he was not out of order and that Fulgentius deferred to Quodvultdeus at the Council of Sufes, later in 523.⁷⁰ This matter

then was not serious and was settled well before the general council at Carthage.

The particularly heavy emphasis that Bonifatius of Carthage put upon the reassertion of the rights of the see of Carthage is understandable considering the fact that there had only been two bishops of Carthage in the past seventy years, covering only twenty-nine years, many of which were, in fact, spent in exile.⁷¹ The authority of the bishop of Carthage was no doubt also weakened by the strong Arian presence that appears to have existed in the city. Bonifatius and the bishops at the Council held the Church of Carthage to be the head and ornament of the African Church.⁷² In the absence of such a head, and with differing experiences under the Vandals, the provinces and their bishops must necessarily have drifted apart, both in terms of identity and in organisation. The see of Carthage seems to have lacked a bishop for eighteen years, although Fulgentius, a bishop from Byzacena, had recently been seen to fill this leadership vacuum. His defence of the faith appears to have attracted the loyalty of the Catholics at Carthage and helped to boost the morale of the local bishops.

There is evidence for friction between the new bishop of Carthage and the primate Liberatus and bishops of Byzacena very soon after the return of peace to the Catholic Church. From a letter dated December 523, Bonifatius appears to have been upset by the behaviour of the Byzacenian bishops concerning one or both of two things.⁷³ Firstly, he may have been offended by the attitude of the Byzacenian bishops towards the monastery of abbot Petrus, which, since the Byzacenian

Council of Iunci had by then been held might already have been manifested in the excommunication of the members of that monastery.⁷⁴

However, Bonifatius seems in addition to have been offended by the request of Liberatus and the Byzacenian council that 'some acknowledgement of honour should be added to the preamble of his addresses' to them.⁷⁵ It is indeed, noticeable that Bonifatius addresses them merely as 'senex [the alternative name for a primate] Liberatus and others who were in the Council of Iunci'.⁷⁶ Bonifatius addressed Missor, primate of Numidia as 'most blessed and honourable holy brother and fellow-priest and senex',⁷⁷ and the bishops of his province of Proconsularis as 'most beloved brothers and fellow-priests'.⁷⁸ It was not as though the Byzacenian bishops had been lax in their address to Bonifatius whom they referred to as 'holy and most blessed lord and greatly deserving venerable father and fellow-priest'.⁷⁹

Since the request for a change in the title of address came in a letter written on behalf of the Council of Iunci,⁸⁰ the letter which Bonifatius must have written which caused the offence and triggered off the request must have predated the Council of Iunci and thus also any decision about the monastery of abbot Petrus, so that the latter is unlikely to have been the major cause for Bonifatius' slight. The affair seems then to have been initiated very soon after the return from exile, and was perpetuated by Bonifatius despite requests to address them with some honourable title and despite their respectful address to Bonifatius himself.

Since Bonifatius was not ashamed to have the evidence of this offence recorded in the minutes of the Council of Carthage, he would seem to have slighted the Byzacenian bishops out of some principle. Perhaps most notable in the address of the Byzacenian bishops in comparison with bishops of Numidia and Proconsularis is the omission of any reference to them as fellow-priests and brothers. Bearing in mind Bonifatius' concern about bishops claiming 'indiscrete equality', he may have deliberately avoided this collegial address, on the grounds that his addressees were claiming undue authority as a result of it, that is, claiming the equality of the provinces before the seniority rule, to discourage them and as a snub. It is quite possible then, that his concern over address was bound up with the claims for precedence.

Differences in opinion about precedence and the relative status and privileges of the bishop of Carthage and the bishops of Byzacena, headed by their primate, had been implicit for some time but had been in abeyance because of more immediate concerns and the absence of occasions when the two might come together. The differences became explicit with the return of the Byzacenian bishops from exile, quite probably at the time when all the bishops arriving in Carthage held a service of thanksgiving with Bonifatius, as we know from the *Vita*.⁸¹

We have already seen examples of the cohesion of the *concilium Byzacenum* from the *Vita*, and this collegial cohesion appears to have continued. At least two Byzacenian councils had already been held before the general council.⁸² It is noticeable that councils of Byzacenian bishops acted unilaterally in excommunicating the members of the

monastery of abbot Peter,⁸³ while Bonifatius in contrast thought that it was for him to use his prerogative to call a general council on the matter.⁸⁴ The bishops of Byzacena, excluding the bishop of Hadrumetum (Hunericopolis) also acted unilaterally in not responding to Bonifatius' invitation.⁸⁵

This conflict or rivalry over authority and precedence within the African Church, which appears to go back into the Vandal period and which may have underlain the unusual behaviour of the Byzacenian bishops at the Council of Carthage in 397, continued to colour politics within the African Church for some decades afterwards. It is quite probable that requests were made to Justinian to confirm the rights and privileges of the Carthaginian Church in 535⁸⁶ and of the primate of Byzacena in 541.⁸⁷ Each time Justinian confirmed the ancient privileges, clearly not wishing to become embroiled in the question of precisely what these privileges were.⁸⁸ As late as 568, the primate of Byzacena was seeking protection of the privileges he held within his province from the new emperor, Justin II.⁸⁹ It is probably significant that it is the bishop of Carthage and the primate of Byzacena who are seeking imperial support for their claims to authority and not the primates of Numidia or of other African provinces.

b) The Council of Carthage 525, the Three Chapters Controversy and conciliarism

It is probably also significant that it was mainly from precisely these two areas, Carthage and Byzacena, that the known protagonists of the Three Chapters came. In this controversy, African bishops acted in consort to defend the sacrosanctity of conciliar decisions, specifically those of the Council of Chalcedon, which had accepted the so-called Three Chapters - certain writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Ibas of Edessa - which Justinian, seeking to find common ground with the Monophysites of the eastern provinces, condemned in 543/4. However, it must be more than a coincidence that the bishops and clerics from the regions which were most assertive in the defence of their own prerogatives, should also be most assertive in defence of the collective authority of bishops. Carthage and the province of Byzacena appear to have been the areas of greatest vitality in the African Church, producing nearly all the known African ecclesiastical writers in this period. Though such vitality could be clearly turned towards internal conflict when differences arose, it could also be powerful in the defence of commonly held beliefs.

Carthage, despite being at the natural epicentre of persecution during the Vandal period, had proved itself resilient, and the Catholic populace of this important port city, in close contact as it was with the rest of the Mediterranean, seems to have always been an important factor for the Vandal kings to take into consideration. Despite the adverse conditions which appear to have driven the Church underground at

times,⁸⁰ Carthage could nurture churchleaders and writers, such as Quodvultdeus, Deogratias and Eugenius, bishops of Carthage, and Victor of Vita and Ferrandus of Carthage. With the change of conditions in 523, the new bishop Bonifatius was quick to reassert the prerogatives of the see of Carthage as he saw them. In doing so he had the argument behind him that the reestablishment of a strong leading figure or head for the Church was necessary to restore Church discipline.

In Bonifatius' successor Reparatus (535-51) we see a churchleader who in addition to probably seeking the confirmation of the privileges of the Church of Carthage from Justinian,⁸¹ was also called to answer to the emperor in 551 for his opposition to the imperial attack on the Three Chapters.⁸² This followed the excommunication of Pope Vigilius by an African council in 550, in which Reparatus must necessarily have been very much involved.⁸³ Reparatus was deposed on what may have been trumped-up charges, and replaced by an imperial appointee - Primosus.⁸⁴ From Carthage also came the archdeacon, Liberatus, who wrote a epitome of the history of the background to the Three Chapters dispute, the *Breviarium causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum* in the early 560s, very much opposed to the condemnation of the Three Chapters.⁸⁵ Victor of Tonnena should perhaps be mentioned here since his see was in the province of Proconsularis, though its position in relation to Carthage is unknown.⁸⁶ Victor was exiled to the Thebaid for his opposition to the imperial condemnation of the Three Chapters.⁸⁷ Before he died there in 567, he compiled a *Chronicon*, the latter part of which described the Three Chapters controversy from his partisan point of view.⁸⁸

By comparison we hear of few ecclesiastical writers from Numidia. A letter survives by Antoninus Honoratus, bishop of Cirta from the 430's.⁹⁹ The only notable Numidian churchman from the period of the Three Chapters was the primate, Firmus of Tipasa, who was also called to answer to the emperor in 551, but who gave in before imperial pressure.¹⁰⁰ However Firmus found resistance to his authority in Numidia until Primosus pointed out the consequences of opposition to a Numidian council in 554.¹⁰¹ The Church in Numidia may well have been handicapped by the fact that, both under the Vandals and Byzantines the province was split between Vandal or Byzantine control and areas of Moorish domination.¹⁰²

In the Vandal period, Byzacena produced in addition to Fulgentius, Vigilius, bishop of Thapsus, the author of anti-Arian dialogues and of a work against Eutyches.¹⁰³ In addition, Victor of Vita appears to have originated from Byzacena¹⁰⁴ and Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage and disciple of Fulgentius, had close connections with Byzacena.¹⁰⁵ Ferrandus strongly opposed the condemnation of the Three Chapters, in common with Facundus of Hermiane.¹⁰⁶ As such, Ferrandus was a notable link between Fulgentius' generation and that involved in the defence of the Three Chapters.

The only other figure we know of who also linked Fulgentius and his circle with opponents of the imperial policy was Boethius or Boethus, primate of Byzacena in 550.¹⁰⁷ His representatives, Verecundus of Iunci and Primasius of Hadrumetum, were called to answer to the emperor in 551,¹⁰⁸ and from the fact that he was a correspondent of a

certain Sorcius who also opposed Justinian's initiatives, we can be fairly sure that Boethius was a defender of the Three Chapters.¹⁰⁹ This Boethius or Boethus is probably the bishop Boethos who appears among the bishops answering from exile in Sardinia under Thrasamund questions put to them by the Scythian monks.¹¹⁰

The first generation of Byzantine rule from 533,¹¹¹ produced a number of episcopal writers from Byzacena. Verecundus, bishop of Iunci, a stalwart defender of the Three Chapters, who died in exile in Chalcedon for his efforts,¹¹² wrote a commentary on the Canticles and a *Carmen de Satisfactione Paenitentiae*,¹¹³ and possibly also compiled excerpts from the Council of Chalcedon.¹¹⁴ Bishop Primasius of Hadrumetum was also called to answer for his opposition to the condemnation of the Three Chapters, though he gave way when offered the primateship of Byzacena.¹¹⁵ He wrote a work on the Book of Revelation¹¹⁶ and another on what makes a heretic, followed by two on the marks of a heretic.¹¹⁷ Another opponent of the imperial condemnation of the Three Chapters in 543/4 was Pontianus, bishop of Thaenae, probably primate of Byzacena at this time who wrote a letter to Justinian airing his misgivings at the condemnation.¹¹⁸ The province of Byzacena, then, like the Church of Carthage, was strong and vocal in its opposition, as it had been earlier in the face of the Arian Vandals. It produced other writers who wrote works on more eirenic religious subjects. The writings of Pacundus of Hermiane, however, deserve further discussion, since they are our best introduction to the attitudes which led in Africa to such vehement opposition to the condemnation of the Three Chapters.

Facundus, bishop of Hermiane in Byzacena, was probably the greatest of these polemicists, writing twelve books *Pro Defensione Trium Capitulorum* addressed to Justinian in 547/8, partly with the intention of winning the support of Vigilius, bishop of Rome.¹¹⁹ There are few works to compare to this for the forthrightness and audacity with which Facundus opposed imperial measures.¹²⁰ Justinian took the work seriously, answering it specifically in his second edict of condemnation of 551, and took harsh measures against his mainly African opponents.¹²¹ Facundus' work no doubt influenced the decision of the African council in 550 to break off communion with Vigilius, when he gave way before imperial pressure and agreed to the condemnation.

Facundus, like Ferrandus, held that the decisions of general councils were sacrosanct, particularly if confirmed by the bishop of Rome and accepted by posterity, as the Council of Chalcedon had been.¹²² As Ferrandus had said 'all of the Council of Chalcedon, because it is the whole Council of Chalcedon, is true; whatever has been said, done or decided and confirmed there, we know the same has been done by the ineffable and hidden power of the Holy Spirit'.¹²³ As such, councils of the Church have superior authority to individuals whose decisions are fallable and cannot be forced upon it.¹²⁴

Facundus was more concerned to defend this juristic principle than to expound the theological content of the works of the offending three writers.¹²⁵ As Pontianus, bishop of Thaenae, writing probably on behalf of the bishops of Byzacena and in response to the condemnation of Justinian, said, 'their writings were hardly known to us up till

now'.¹²⁶ Generally ill-informed about the Christological controversies of the past century, and given the isolation of the African Church and its preoccupation with defending their Trinitarian views, these African bishops viewed the Council of Chalcedon as an undisputed touchstone of authority in the Catholic Church, and regarded anyone who wished to change it as tantamount to a heretic¹²⁷ and as wishing to do so only out of a political motive.¹²⁸ They considered that political leaders like the emperor should be obedient sons of the Church and should not seek authority that was not due.¹²⁹

Despite his knowledge of eastern ecclesiastical politics, Facundus adopted a jaundiced, though what he would have considered himself a no-nonsense, Latin viewpoint of such things. According to this view, if a heresy arose in the Latin-speaking Church, it had been quickly nipped in the bud by men such as Augustine and was not discussed endlessly as the Greeks did, only leading to the exacerbation of the quarrel.¹³⁰ We can imagine that the circumstances under Vandal rule can have only helped to crystallise this feisty outlook. We can see the same attitude clearly in Vigilius of Thapsus.¹³¹

Shortly after the decision of the African council to excommunicate Pope Vigilius, Facundus wrote a letter against a certain Mocianus, who though an African, appears to have been an official in Constantinople, and who, though he sympathised with the defenders of the Three Chapters, thought it was wrong to break communion within the Catholic Church.¹³² Indeed, he accused Facundus of being a Donatist, supporting his accusation with citations from Augustine stating that to

break communion was to break the peace of the Church.¹²³ Facundus argued against this, stating that far from being schismatic, he was defending the universal decisions of the fathers of the Church and that in doing so he was following in the line of the pure Catholic Church. He defined this in a negative way thus, 'that is the way to hell which the multitude took in accordance with the wish of Constantius at [the Councils of] Rimini and Serdica..., and which he who was Arian followed when the Vandals were ruling; then with the Roman Empire succeeding he changed with the time so that he was seen to be Catholic; now also with prejudices arising from the palace against the Catholic religion, he follows the same way'.¹²⁴

Facundus is here portraying the Catholic Church in the mode of *ecclesia militans*, whereas in Augustine's day, widely considered as the golden age, the dominant mood had been that of *ecclesia triumphans*. As a consequence Facundus appears to be adopting a more minimal and exclusive and hence more rigorist definition of the Catholic Church. His emphasis was more on the continuity of the pure unadulterated line within the Catholic Church which could be preserved only by breaking off communion with parties who had compromised, and which perhaps contaminated the purity of the line by falling in with the beliefs of those who were collaborating with the secular power.

This rigoristic streak was after all a recurring feature in the African Church and had emerged both in Cyprian's time and among the Donatists.¹²⁵ It was by no means just the attitude of a small, vocal minority, either in the case of the Donatists, or at the time of the

Three Chapters controversy. Indeed, a fair proportion of African bishops must have been in support of breaking off communion from Vigilius for the measure to have been passed by the African general council. If many bishops had been in agreement with Mocianus, they did not make their feelings felt at the council. While Justinian's initiative was also opposed in other Latin-speaking provinces, namely in Dalmatia and Illyricum, and by Datius, bishop of Milan and some Roman deacons,¹³⁶ the Africans appear to have been the largest and most vocal contingent.¹³⁷ Although imperial bribery and bullying managed to wear down the opposition¹³⁸ its very existence and the size and strength deserve to be looked at in the wider historical context of the African Church.

This stringent vein which runs through the history of the African Church was bound up with the desire for a pure and exclusive Church. At the same time however, it seems to have been a product of local and centrifugal forces. It had been, in Augustine's time, embodied in the Donatist Church. The suppression of the Donatist Church in the early fifth century and the effects of the Vandal invasion, creating a new counter-Church in the Arian Church, must have made it very difficult and undesirable to sustain separate Church hierarchies amongst the provincial population. The broader Church of the Catholics, following the absorption of the Donatists, and the problems of maintaining Church discipline under the Vandals must have allowed some free expression of local traditions within the Catholic Church. The differences between the Church in Byzacena and the Church of Carthage may be viewed in this light.

The rigoristic element which seems to have been a perennial feature within the African Church was expressed in the Vandal period in combatting the serious threat from the rival Arians which enjoyed the sometimes enthusiastic backing of the secular power. Indeed, it seems from surviving sources that much of the energy of the Catholic leaders was necessarily put into this mortal struggle.¹³⁹ There was a natural tendency to emphasise common communion with the rest of the Roman and Catholic world as a counterbalance to Vandal and Arian power within Africa.¹⁴⁰ However, in reality direct contact with the transmarine Catholic Churches was difficult and at best only spasmodic.¹⁴¹

In addition, the secular power, in the person of the emperor at Byzantium, who alone could through military means bring the African Catholic Church back into the world of the Roman Empire, seems to have made few diplomatic efforts and no military efforts to free it after the peace of 474.¹⁴² At the same time developments in ecclesiastical politics in the eastern provinces and the desire of Zeno and Anastasius to appease the Monophysites led to a distancing of the Latin-speaking Churches from those of the Greek east, as in the Acacian Schism which lasted from 484 to 519.¹⁴³ We know for instance that Fulgentius did not go to Egypt for this reason.¹⁴⁴ The African Catholic Church was neglected in its 'Babylonian captivity' by the emperor, particularly from 474.¹⁴⁵ As we have seen from Victor, frustration and anger might be shown by Africans at this neglect.¹⁴⁶ However, the African Church must have grown used to this type of precarious independence, and to depending mainly on its own resources. Indeed, under Hilderic it enjoyed

an Indian summer, putting its house in order with the blessing, and perhaps the help, of the Vandal king, and without imperial interference.

As we have seen, Facundus made a connection between remaining Catholic under the Vandals and opposing imperial threats to the Council of Chalcedon. Indeed, it would be understandable that those who fought Vandal oppression and Vandal attempts to convert Catholics to Arianism without receiving much imperial help would be less tolerant of imperial interference in what were considered strictly Church affairs. It has been seen that those regions which appeared most active in resisting the Vandal Arians also seem to have been most active in defence of the Council of Chalcedon as they saw it. We have seen two examples of churchmen associated with both struggles. Though most of the bishops who were involved in the defence of the Three Chapters could not have been in office under the Vandals before Hilderic, many of them may have been clerics and would have grown up in the atmosphere of the *ecclesia militans*. In the twenty years between 523 and 543/4 and with the Byzantine reconquest in 533, the Catholic Church had the opportunity and the time in which to consolidate itself. However, the struggles of the past century and the habit of resistance had clearly not been lost.

As Ferrandus said in a letter to the *dux* Reginus, not long after Fulgentius' death, 'a people scandalised is easily driven into schism'.¹⁴⁷ Ferrandus may well have been drawing on his experience of the African Church. If this is the case, his observation is relevant not only to the behaviour of the African bishops who excommunicated Vigilius, but also to the split between the bishop of Carthage and the

primate of Byzacena and their respective supporters in 525. As has been suggested, the causes of their differences would seem to predate the return from exile. It is very likely that the need to demonstrate solidarity in our Catholic sources disguised other such differences, motivated by centrifugal, particularist tendencies and characterised by strict adherence to tradition or canon law. Indeed, it was only with the return of peace and the attempts to enforce conformity that such tendencies within the Church were adumbrated.

The adoption of a rigorist attitude presupposes the existence of a lax or compromising element in the Church. Much of the Catholic literature that exists for this period demonstrates that the counter-Church of the Arians was the main focus its polemic. However, much of the literature could be considered to have had another motive, that of encouraging the faint-hearted within their own Church to avoid the snares of Arianism. This is particularly true of Victor of Vita's *Historia Persecutionis*, which, like the polemical theological works, was not intended to be read by Arians so much as to instruct Catholics of the dangers of Arianism and to give them examples of how to resist it. While Victor of Vita's technique was historical and martyrological, that of the polemical works was theological. Victor included negative examples of people who had converted in order to demonstrate that actual conversion was a serious threat, though it might be disguised as harmless compromise.¹⁴⁸

Indeed, as in the case of the Three Chapters Controversy, we know that there were Catholics who gave way to pressure from the Vandal

Arians. This is best demonstrated by the fact that Catholic clerics of all levels had undergone rebaptism around the time of Huneric's persecution. Perhaps more indicative is the fact that many Catholic bishops were prepared to swear an oath agreeing to support Huneric's son Hilderic for the throne and not to send letters abroad in return for retaining their churches.¹⁴⁹ The differences between those prepared to swear and those against doing so must have been further widened by the fact that those swearing were exiled in Africa and those not were sent to Corsica.¹⁵⁰ Such differences must have been potentially serious for the unity of the African Church.

We can imagine that there were many more recriminations after 523 than we actually hear about. Another, but milder, expression of compromise was voiced by one bishop as a result of a dream which told him to 'close your door and hide until the tempest has passed'.¹⁵¹ This attitude of passive non-resistance must have been common, though Augustine at the time of the Vandal invasion had advocated that a priest should remain with his flock whenever they needed him to dispense the sacraments, which might therefore preclude flight or hiding.¹⁵² Bishop Reparatus, addressing Pope John II, complained about bishops who fled abroad during persecution without cause but who, in the circumstances, had to be tolerated.¹⁵³ There were then many different degrees and forms of compromise. Those who did compromise were unlikely to advertise the fact, while Catholic writers might only mention compromise as a means of dissuading people from it. At any rate, we can be sure that there was much more accommodation on the day to day level than the polemicists wished to have known.

Thus schism might arise out of a conflict over compromise and rigorism or over interpretations of past traditions. These could of course be linked. But if the events leading up to the Council of 525 exhibited division within the Catholic hierarchy, one attitude expressed by both parties shows that a very important principle was held commonly throughout the Church. Like the bishop of Carthage and primate of Numidia, Liberatus, primate of Byzacena, also considered that Bonifatius should make sure that 'no one should be allowed in any way to overcome the solidity of the canons of the Church and you should show an example to all so that posterity should not neglect to serve the ends constituted by the decisions of our fathers'.¹⁵⁴ Bonifatius stated in return that 'nothing in divine and human actions, nothing in holy and public matters can obtain any certainty, if our successors, as if they were more knowledgeable, after a number of years should be seen to correct our fathers'.¹⁵⁵ Bonifatius was quoting from Capreolus, bishop of Carthage, addressing the Emperor Theodosius II in reference to the decisions of the Council of Ephesus in 431.¹⁵⁶ Ferrandus repeated this citation in his letter to the Roman deacons Pelagius and Anatolius just after Justinian's condemnation, as did Liberatus in his *Breviarium*, this time specifically in defence of the Council of Chalcedon.¹⁵⁷ Fulgentius also expressed such an attitude in a letter to Ferrandus written sometime between 523 and 527, that is, around the time of the Council of Carthage.¹⁵⁸

The African Church held conciliar decisions to be sacrosanct and unretractable. The past was seen as an age of greater wisdom and authority which could not be surpassed by the inferior present.

Antiquity and distance only seemed to lend these councils greater authority. This is a notable change of attitude from that expressed by Augustine in his *De Baptismo*. Augustine considered that more recent councils could change and annul decisions of earlier councils.¹⁵⁹ Lacking their own councils, being unable to enforce church discipline for so long, the African Church clung jealously to the conciliar decisions of what had become considered as the golden age of Aurelius of Carthage, which Bonifatius and the bishops sought to reestablish in 525. These canons were an essential element in the identity of the African Catholic Church which, its leaders had fought so hard to preserve in adversity. Strong support for the inviolability of conciliar decisions can be seen being expressed from the time of Capreolus of Carthage, though in the late fifth century, Vigilius of Thapsus expressed attitudes which are more akin to those of Augustine in this matter.¹⁶⁰

This very high regard for the authority of the past in general as against that of the present is also to be found in the writings of Fulgentius. He showed a very great reverence for the writings of Augustine in particular, whose teachings he sought merely to defend, preserve and disseminate rather than elaborate.¹⁶¹ Augustine was a symbol of the strength of the African Catholic Church, whose writings were like a treasury whose abundance gave Africans a near self-sufficiency in religious instruction when conditions allowed Christian instruction, just as African canon law gave the African Church autonomy in judicial terms when the law could be enforced. Similar yearning for the past in a more general way pervades the work of Victor, who looked

back to the great peaceful and fruitful age before the Vandals, when the Catholic Church prospered in the civilised world of the Roman Empire.

But it was conciliar authority in particular which the Catholic bishops of the sixth century held in reverence. The differences of opinion between Bonifatius and Liberatus seem to turn on the precedence of certain canons and traditions rather than on their general value. Bonifatius and Liberatus placed a high value on their councils, past and present. It was however also only through councils that they could express their authority. It was through the realisation of conciliar authority that Bonifatius and Liberatus came into conflict. The questions of precedence and address of episcopal colleagues and of the monastery of abbot Petrus, were all matters of conciliar authority, and concerned the conflict between this authority at provincial and general African level. It was notably through conciliar authority that the African bishops expressed their anger at Vigilius' weakness over the condemnation of the Three Chapters.

The African bishops fought fiercely to defend the authority of the African Councils, which were specific to them and on account of which they could usually deal with their own affairs without needing to appeal to a higher authority such as the bishop of Rome or to a general council of the whole Church. In the same way African bishops were concerned to defend the conciliar principle in its loftiest and most authoritative manifestation, the general council. In the case of the Three Chapters they were specifically concerned to defend the Council of Chalcedon, the only general council to be held since the Vandals had

taken Carthage, which had been confirmed by the bishop of Rome and which, by the time of the controversy, was nearly a century old. To the African bishops it must have appeared as the last great expression of the universal Church as a whole, before schisms and differences divided the Church of the former Roman Empire (though the past unity of this Church was, in many ways, mythical). To the Africans, it was the symbol of the Catholic catholicity. The bishops of the Council had been seen to conduct their own affairs without interference and bullying from the emperor.

The general council was the highest expression of episcopal collegiality within the Church as a whole, and episcopal collegiality had also been defended as the highest expression of the unity of the African Church. Eugenius of Carthage, it should be recalled had suggested calling a kind of general council in Africa, including the bishop of Rome and other transmarine bishops, in order to settle the debate between the Catholic and Arian interpretation of the Trinity. Eugenius naturally wished to play upon the universality of the Catholic Church to make their plight known abroad, to benefit from the solidarity of the Catholic Church and to use it as a psychological weapon against the Vandals and Arians who held political power, but only in Africa.¹⁶²

CHAPTER 8 NOTES

- 1) Maassen *Literatur des canonischen Rechts* 1 183. The Council of Carthage of 484 should not be included since it was called by the Vandal king.
- 2) Courtois 269-70. Gelimer exhibited the warlike character of the Vandals reminiscent of Gaiseric, taking the throne from the unwarlike Hilderic, Procopius *Wars* 3.9.1-9 (82-6). After capture by Belisarius he preferred to give up the opportunity to become a patrician rather than renounce his Arian faith, Procopius *Wars* 4.9.14 (282). We do not know whether he reversed Hilderic's policy towards the Catholic Church. We do know that the bishop of Carthage sent an embassy to Pope Boniface II (530-2), *Liber Pontificalis* 1 281. That the bishop of Carthage was free to do this suggests that restrictions were not being put upon the Catholic Church. The embassy may have been seeking confirmation of the privileges of the Church of Carthage, see R. Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna, an aspect of Justinian's *Kirchenpolitik*' *Byzantion* 49 (1979) 282. It may possibly have followed on from the holding of a council.
- 3) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.523.2, MGH a.a.11 197.
- 4) E.g. those of Byzacena, VF 27.19-20 (131). The bishop of Carthage called the bishops of Proconsularis to council three weeks before the beginning of the general African council, CCSL 149 259 line 201, 255 line 2. This was probably for a provincial council.
- 5) For the dedication of a church in Furnos (Proconsularis), VF 27.27 (133). For the rebuilding of churches at around this time - basilica of Vitalis and chapel of Iucundus, Sufetula (Byzacena), M. Duval *Eglises*

africaines 1 132-3; 2; *Basilica Maiorum*, Carthage, L. Rnnabli *Les inscriptions funéraires chrétiennes de Carthage. 2 La basilique de Nçidfa* (Rome, 1982) 30.

6) CCSL 149 260 line 227.

7) Procopius *Wars* 3.21.17-25 (180-4).

8) CCSL 149 255 line 2, 259 line 201. By 535 it was back in use as the cathedral, *Collectio Avellana* Ep.85, CSEL 35 328.

9) CCSL 91 283-308, 91A 763-866.

10) CCSL 149 255 lines 1-2.

11) See CCSL 149 283 and Mansi 8 841-2.

12) CCSL 149 255-6 lines 36-40.

12a) Certainly Servusdei of Hadrumetum (Hunerikopolis) attended. This is noteworthy since the later opposition to the Three Chapters policy by Primasius, bishop of Hadrumetum, was bought off with the promise of the primateship of Byzacena, after the death of bishop Boethus in 551; Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.552.2, MGH a.a. 11 203. Hadrumetum was an important port and clearly had pretensions as the first city of Byzacena on a par with Carthage in Proconsularis. By attending this Council, the bishop of Hadrumetum may have hoped to gain some favour with the bishop of Carthage. An earlier bishop of Hadrumetum was also one of the few bishops to attend the Council of Chalcedon, see Laurent 'Evêques d'Afrique au concile de Chalcédoine' 152-73. Other bishops who attended the Council of Carthage who may have been from Byzacena include Avus Horreensis (no.30), who Courtois considered must be from Horrea Coelia (Courtois 307), though there are place-names with the Horrea element in most provinces. Courtois also considered that Sabinianus Gummenartarum (no.45) was from the place called Gummi in Byzacena (Courtois 306),

- though there also appear to have been a Gummi in Proconsularis; cf. Lancel *Actes* 4 1389-90. Felix Vicoturrensis could possibly be from Vicus Ateri in Byzacena. However, this see is correctly spelt elsewhere in the Council minutes (CCSL 149 279 line 285).
- 13) CCSL 149 255 lines 16-22.
 - 14) Cf. Facundus of Hermiane *Pro Defensione Trium Capitulorum* 8.7.20 CCSL 90A 258. On reception see Pewesin 28-9, 69-73.
 - 15) E.g. Facundus *Pro Defensione* 8.7.23 CCSL 90A 258. See Pewesin 71.
 - 16) CCSL 149 261 lines 263-5.
 - 17) CCSL 149 263 lines 353-4, 270 lines 619-20, from the Council of Carthage 397 cited at Council of Carthage 525, CCSL 149 264 lines 393-4.
 - 18) CCSL 149 271-2.
 - 19) CCSL 149 74.
 - 20) *Collectio Avellana* Ep.85, CSEL 35 328.
 - 21) Courtois 306-8.
 - 22) Lancel *Actes* 1 144. Maier *passim*
 - 23) CCSL 149 258 lines 156-9, 256 lines 54-6.
 - 24) See above 270-1. For Mauretania see the inscription from Mouzaïaville, ILCV 1102 = Courtois App.2:94, 378. The problems preventing bishops from coming to the Council of Carthage from Mauretania Caesariensis must have involved the Moors, CCSL 149 260 lines 221-4. For trouble with the Moors in Byzacena see VF 5.27 (33), 28.22-5 (139-141).
 - 25) CCSL 149 255 lines 28-31.
 - 26) CCSL 149 263 lines 356-261.
 - 27) We might recall Victor's use of the Carthaginian archives, perhaps when he was in hiding; see above 181.

- 28) CCSL 149 284-311.
- 29) CCSL 149 263-270.
- 30) CCSL 149 269 lines 561-574; lines 580-585; 267 lines lines 515-7;
cf. 259 lines 173-6.
- 31) See above 264-6.
- 32) CCSL 149 267 lines 507-10; cf. CCSL 149 205 and VF 18.2 (91).
- 33) His is the initiating voice throughout the Council of Carthage,
e.g. CCSL 149 255 7-22, 259 lines 181-190. Cf. Munier 'Tradition
littéraire des canons africains' 8-9.
- 34) CCSL 149 268 esp. lines 533-4, cf. CSL 149 191-2.
- 35) CCSL 149 266 line 462; cf. CCSL 149 365.
- 36) CCSL 149 265 lines 420-1; cf. CCSL 149 185.
- 37) CCSL 149 265 lines 433-5.
- 38) CCSL 149 187.
- 39) CCSL 149 266 line 464, cf. CCSL 149 214.
- 40) See above 127-8. For the end of the fifth century, Rufinianus VF
9.3 (55).
- 41) *Collectio Avellana* Ep.85, CSEL 35 330.
- 42) CCSL 149 265 lines 446-9; cf. CCSL 149 202.
- 43) CCSL 149 265 lines 437-8; cf. CCSL 149 193.
- 44) CCSL 149 278 lines 239-244.
- 45) CCSL 149 265 line 436; cf. CCSL 149 190-1.
- 46) VF 13.5 (67).
- 47) CCSL 149 264 lines 374-387; cf. CCSL 149 8-9.
- 48) See above 307.
- 49) CCSL 149 265 lines 429-430. Cf. the repetition of the canon from
the Council of Nicaea, CCSL 149 263 line 372.

- 50) CCSL 149 264 lines 391-2; cf.CCSL 149 139.
- 51) CCSL 149 264 lines 410-1; cf.CCSL 149 321.
- 52) CCSL 149 265 lines 427-8; cf.CCSL 149 321
- 53) John the Deacon *Ep. ad Senarium* PL 59 404AB. This letter, in speaking of baptism, states 'But nor should one be persuaded that, because some force of necessity arises (which now is said to be the case in Africa) that priests should perform holy baptism'. The addressee is very likely to be the senator Senarius mentioned in Avitus of Vienne *Ep.* 39, MGH a.a.6.2 68, Ennodius *Ep.*30, MGH a.a.7 32-3 and Cassiodorus *Variae* 4.3, MGH a.a.12 115-6. These date Senarius to the first two decades of the sixth century, cf.PLRE Senarius 988-9. John the Deacon may later have become Pope John II (523-526), see Dekkers *Clavis Patrum Latinorum* 208.
- 54) CCSL 149 264 line 398; cf.CCSL 149 139.
- 55) CCSL 149 265 lines 443-5; cf. CCSL 149 201-2.
- 56) CCSL 149 265 lines 424-6; cf.CCSL 149 186.
- 57) *Ep.*11 *Ferrandi* 2-4, CCSL 91 360-2.
- 58) CCSL 149 265 line 450.
- 59) CCSL 149 264 lines 408-9; cf.CCSL 149 184.
- 60) CCSL 149 264 lines 404-5; cf.CCSL 149 141.
- 61) CCSL 149 264 lines 402-3; cf.CCSL 149 141.
- 62) Felix III *Ep.* 7, PL 59 924-927.
- 63) CCSL 149 266 lines 473-4. See C.Munier 'Un canon inédit du XVe concile de Carthage:«Ut nullus ad Romanam ecclesiam audeat appellare»' *ESR* 40 (1966) 113-26.
- 64) CCSL 149 266 lines 468-9; cf.CCSL 149 218.
- 65) CCSL 149 266 lines 470-4; cf.CCSL 149 218, 227.

- 66) See above 298-301.
- 67) CCSL 149 256 lines 58-65. See Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna' 283.
- 68) CCSL 149 256 line 63.
- 69) E.g. CCSL 149 259 line 201.
- 70) VF 27.19-22 (131-3).
- 71) Deogratias, three years, 454-7, Victor 1.24-7 (7). Eugenius 478/79-c.505, in exile 484-7, 497/8?-505; Victor 2.6 (14); *Laterculus Regum Vandalorum* (Augiensis) 5, 9, MGH a.a.13 458-9; Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.505, MGH a.a.11 198; Gregory of Tours *Historia Francorum* 2.3, MGH s.r.m.1.1 65.
- 72) CCSL 149 259 lines 198-9, 255 lines 27-8.
- 73) CCSL 149 277-8 lines 210-250, esp.211-2. The business which Bonifatius found difficult cannot have been the matter of the three peoples referred to in this section since these were to be resolved by reference to the canons (CCSL 149 278 lines 234-239) and so do not appear to have been controversial. The same would be true of the people taken over from the Thamullumenses, 278 lines 239-244.
- 74) CCSL 149 277 lines 195-7, 278 lines 244-250. This may have happened at the Council of Iunci; however, since the first section refers to a number of councils, the excommunication, which was likely to be a final decision, is likely to have taken place at a later council. We know that the Council of Sufes, for instance, came after that held at Iunci; VF 27.19-20 (131).
- 75) CCSL 149 277 lines 195-6.
- 76) CCSL 149 277 lines 198-199.
- 77) CCSL 149 257 lines 114-6.

- 78) CCSL 149 259 lines 192-6.
- 79) CCSL 149 276 lines 166-170. For another example of high-handed behaviour by Bonifatius, this time towards the primate of Numidia see Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna' 283 n.24.
- 80) CCSL 149 276 lines 168-169.
- 81) VF 26.2, 10, 17 (123-125).
- 82) VF 27.19-20 (131).
- 83) CCSL 149 273-274 lines 40-47.
- 84) CCSL 149 273-5, esp. 273 lines 7-12.
- 85) CCSL 149 260 lines 229-233.
- 86) *Collectio Avellana* Ep.87, CSEL 35 333 shows the seeking of confirmation of such rights from the bishop of Rome. These rights were confirmed in Justinian *Novella* 37 (a.535) in *Novellae* ed. K.E.Zacharias von Lingenthal (Leipzig, 1881) 1 207-11. See Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna' 281-2. Cf. R.Massigli 'Primat de Carthage et métropolitain de Byzacène: un conflit dans l'Eglise africaine au VIe siècle' *Mélanges R.Cagnat. Recueil de mémoires concernant l'épigraphie et les antiquités romaines* (Paris, 1912) 430-1.
- 87) Justinian *Constitutio* 132 (a.541) in *Novellae* ed.K.E.Zacharias de Lingenthal (Leipzig, 1881) 2 174. Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna' 284-5.
- 88) Justinian *Novella* 37, 1 208-11; Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna' 283-5.
- 89) K.E.Zacharias von Lingenthal *Ius Graeco-Romanum* 3 (Leipzig, 1857) 9-10. See Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna' 303-306. Cf.Massigli 'Primat de Carthage et métropolitain de Byzacène' 438-439.
- 90) See above 181.

- 91) Justinian *Novella* 37, 1 207-11. See Markus 'Carthage - Prima Justiniana - Ravenna' 281-282.
- 92) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.551, MGH a.a.11 202.
- 93) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.550.1, MGH a.a.11 202
- 94) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.552.1, MGH a.a.11 202, a.554.2, MGH a.a.11 203; MGH *Epistolae* 3 (Berlin, 1892) 439, lines 36-41.
- 95) PL 68 969-1050.
- 96) See e.g. Courtois 306, 307 n.51.
- 97) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.555, MGH a.a.11 204.
- 98) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.544-567, MGH a.a.11 201-6.
- 99) PL 50 567-70.
- 100) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.551-2, MGH a.a.11 202.
- 101) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.554, MGH a.a.11 203.
- 102) See above 270-1 and Desanges 'Numidie vandale et byzantine' 41-69.
- 103) See ch.3 n.54.
- 104) See above 181.
- 105) See above 290 for Ferrandus' friends in Byzacena. In addition, Ferrandus included in his *Breviatio Canonum*, twenty-one canons from eight different Byzacenian councils, while those from no other provincial council are cited, see CCSL 149 xxxvii-viii and 307-11.
- 106) See R.Eno 'Doctrinal Authority in the African Ecclesiology of the Sixth Century: Ferrandus and Facundus' *REA* 22 (1976) 95-113.
- 107) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.552 (Boethius), MGH a.a.11 203. Cf. Facundus of Hermiane *Liber contra Macianum* PL 67 863C (*senex* Boethius). Cf. Mandouze Boethius 146.
- 108) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.551.1, MGH a.a.11 202.
- 109) Facundus *Liber contra Macianum* PL 67 863C.

- 110) *Ep.15 Episcoporum* CCSL 91A 447 line 5.
- 111) For a discussion of the writers of the Three Chapters period see Averil Cameron 'Byzantine Carthage: the Literary Evidence' in J.H.Humphrey (ed.) *Excavations at Carthage 1978 conducted by the University of Michigan VII* (Ann Arbor, 1982) 45-8.
- 112) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.552, MGH a.a.11 203.
- 113) CCSL 93 ed.R.Demeulenaere (Turnhout, 1976) 3-203, 205-214.
- 114) CCSL 93 xiii-xvi.
- 115) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.552, MGH a.a.11 202-3.
- 116) CCSL 92 ed.A.W.Adams (Turnhout, 1985).
- 117) Isidore of Seville *De Viris Illustribus* 22, PL 83 1095A.
- 118) PL 67 995-8. For the likelihood that Pontianus was primate see Pewesin 43; Eno 'Ferrandus and Facundus' 97. Cf. Mandouze, Ponticanus 2 883.
- 119) E.Chrysos 'Zur Datierung und Tendenz der Werke des Facundus von Hermiane' *Kleronomia* 1 (1969) 317-8.
- 120) E.g. Pewesin 47.
- 121) Pewesin 139-143; Mansi 9 537-82. E.Schwartz 'Drei dogmatische Schriften Iustinians' *Abhandlungen der Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaft. Philosophisch-Historische Abteilung* Neue Folge 18 (1939) 72-117.
- 122) See Eno 98-100, Facundus *Pro Defensione* 5.5.1, CCSL 90A 156; 7.6.7, CCSL 90A 213.
- 123) Ferrandus *Ep.ad Pelagium et Anatolium* 3, PL 67 923C.
- 124) E.g. Facundus *Pro Defensione* 10.6.5, CCSL 90A 320. Pewesin 69-70.
- 125) Pewesin 55-64.

- 126) PL 67 997-8. Liberatus' *Breviarium* was compiled, according to the author, partly to inform Latin-speaking Catholics of the Christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries, PL 68 969C.
- 127) E.g. Facundus *Epistola Fidei Catholicae* 33-4, CCSL 90A 426-7.
- 128) Eno 'Ferrandus and Facundus' 101.
- 129) E.g. Ferrandus *Ep, ad Regium* 16-17, PL 67 944-945, Facundus *Pro Defensione* 2.6.6, CCSL 90A 65 (quoting Pope Leo *Ep.69 ad Leonem Augustum*); Pewesin 93-126. Cf. Fulgentius *De Veritate Praedestinationis* 2.39, CCSL 91A 517.
- 130) Facundus *Pro Defensione* 1.4.38, CCSL 90A 26; 9.5.42, CCSL 90A 294; Pewesin 56-57.
- 131) Vigilius of Thapsus *Contra Eutychetem* 1.1, PL 62 95BC.
- 132) Facundus *Contra Marcianum* PL 67 854D-855A.
- 133) PL 67 855A-856B.
- 134) PL 67 867-868.
- 135) See above 27-30.
- 136) E.g. Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.549.1, a.553.1, a.554.1, MGH a.a.11 202-3.
- 137) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.550-556, MGH a.a.11 202-4 . Pewesin 19-20.
- 138) Victor of Tonnena *Chronicon* a.551-563, MGH a.a.11 202-5. Liberatus *Breviarium* 24, PL 68 1049.
- 139) E.g. see ch.3 and 4.
- 140) See above e.g. 187.
- 141) Cf. Victor 2.44 (23).
- 142) See above e.g. 195-6.
- 143) See above e.g. 196-7, 323-5.

- 144) VF 8.18-19 (51).
- 145) Cf. Victor 2.31 (30).
- 146) See above 195-6.
- 147) PL 67 946A.
- 148) See above 245-6.
- 149) Victor 3.17-19 (44).
- 150) Victor 3.20 (45).
- 151) Victor 2.20 (17-18).
- 152) Augustine *Ep.* 228.6-8, CSEL 57 488-90.
- 153) *Collectio Avellana Ep.* 85, CSEL 35 330. Cf. see above 127.
- 154) CCSL 149 277 lines 184-7.
- 155) CCSL 149 278 lines 216-219.
- 156) Capreolus *Ep. ad Theodosium Augustum* (excerpt), PL 67 925.
- 157) Ferrandus *Ep. ad Pelagium et Anatolium*, PL 67 925B; Liberatus *Breviarium* PL 68 977A.
- 158) *Ep.* 12 *ad Ferrandum* 22, CCSL 91 375 lines 452-457. See CCSL 91 VII.
- 159) *De Baptismo* 2.3.4-4.5, CSEL 51 178-9.
- 160) R. Kno 'How original was Vigilius of Thapsus?' *Augustinianum* 30 (1990) 63-74; H.J. Sieben *Konzilsidee der alten Kirche* (Paderborn, 1979) 262-7.
- 161) See above 312.
- 162) Victor 2.43-44 (23).

CONCLUSION

The last chapter has served as a conclusion for one of our main themes - the fortune of the Church under the Vandals. It is now necessary to conclude the other two themes with which this thesis is concerned. These are the relations between the Catholic Church and the Vandals and the reactions and responses of Catholics to Vandal rule.

Having established a kingdom in North Africa, the Vandals had to contend with a Romano-African population who outnumbered them many times and who enjoyed a rich and diverse cultural and religious heritage. The creation of an Arian Church was one means of maintaining the identity of the Vandals as a politically dominant elite. Military success seemed to confirm the correctness of the belief they had brought with them. With the establishment of a triumphant Arian Church the leaders of the Catholic Church were not welcome because of their challenge to the form of Christianity professed by the conquerors. This was especially the case within the *sortes Vandalorum* where the Catholics had been particularly strong. Gaiseric, effectively sole master of the lands he had conquered, was in a position to assert himself against those elements which he considered a menace to his political stability.

Gaiseric's conquest isolated the Romano-African population from the rest of the Roman Empire; the leaders of that society, primarily the leaders of the Catholic Church, therefore became very concerned to assert their own Roman and Catholic identity which they felt to be under threat. A Catholic bishop could command the loyalty of his congregation

and regularly inculcate Catholic doctrines thereby shaping the attitude of his followers towards their new political masters and strengthening their attachment to their traditional leaders with whom they had a common culture and religion and in whose continuance they had a vested interest. The Church in Africa had often in the past exhibited a spirit of independence from and intransigence towards the secular power. Gaiseric and his successors were concerned to prevent Catholic worship within Proconsularis, and exile the clergy in order to prevent any potentially subversive preaching, and exile any troublesome clergy from the other provinces. The marriage between Gaiseric's son, Huneric and Valentinian III's daughter appears to have tempered, though not entirely softened Gaiseric's attitude towards the activities of Catholic clergy. However, with the death of Valentinian III in 455, persecution was intensified.

However, it would be unfair to portray the Arian Vandals and the Roman Catholics within Africa as constantly in a state of mortal combat. There was clearly accommodation and compromise on both sides, at some periods and in some regions more than others. There was less need for those whose interests were not immediately challenged to be vociferous.

We can see then that there were checks on Gaiseric's freedom to oppress the Catholic Church in Africa. Firstly, its defenders still held the weapon of eloquence. It also still seemed to enjoy some popular support, for instance among the population of Carthage. The Vandals needed the help of educated and highly-born Romano-Africans for the

effective government of their African lands; some of these, at least, were not prepared to give up their Catholic faith. Finally, emperors did intervene diplomatically on behalf of the African Church, though only spasmodically. By persecuting the Catholics, the Vandals must have been aware that they were creating further reasons for the imperial power to attack their African kingdom. The Vandal king might react to this threat in different ways. In Gaiseric's time, when there was a greater threat from the Empire, such as in the 460's, persecution was greater. In Huneric's reign, persecution of the Catholics appears to have become more intense as the emperor's influence in the Mediterranean receded.

As a result of these pressures, Gaiseric's oppression of the Catholic faith was selective; directed at court officials and Catholic leaders in Proconsularis. Even these categories of people were probably only persecuted spasmodically. It would appear that the Catholics in the provinces of Byzacena and Numidia did not suffer greatly in Gaiseric's reign.

In the first few years of his reign, Huneric continued the cordiality towards the Empire which his father had adopted in his last years, and even allowed Catholics freedom of worship provided equal freedom was permitted to Arians within the Emperor Zeno's lands. However, the dangers of such a policy of peace to Vandal identity must have become clear to the king after a while, for he began to force members of his court to convert to Arianism and to enforce his father's laws against Catholicism within the *sortes Vandalarum*. Huneric turned his efforts towards increasing his political, religious and economic

power within his African kingdom and against those who threatened it. As well as turning against relatives who challenged the succession of his son and who may have been supportive of entente with the Empire, he turned against the Catholic Church.

Political developments in the Mediterranean in general were very auspicious for Huneric to tighten his grip over his African kingdom and over the Catholic Church in particular as it became increasingly clear that the western emperor, Romulus, was not going to be replaced and with Zeno, the eastern emperor preoccupied with the Germanic and Isaurian menaces. At the same time, Zeno's religious policy, favouring the eastern provinces with the issuing of the *Henotikon*, lent little comfort to African Catholics.

Huneric, effectively the son-in-law of the Emperor Valentinian III, called together a conference of all Catholic bishops in Carthage in February 484, in order to debate matters of faith with his Arian bishops. This was clearly reminiscent of the Conference of Carthage of 411, and as with the latter, the outcome was the issuing of harsh laws proscribing the Church which had not hitherto been supported by the secular power. Huneric used the very same laws against the Catholics as Honorius had used against the Donatists.

Huneric now had all the Catholic bishops gathered conveniently together, and though he does not seem to have been very successful in forcing them to convert to Arianism, he was able to goad many of them into swearing an oath to support the succession of his son, Hilderic.

Huneric exiled them outside of their dioceses; while those who refused to swear were sent to Corsica; all Catholic churches being closed.

Huneric aimed at extending the control of the Arian Church, a symbol of Vandal domination and identity, not only over the royal court but also over the more important members of the lay population, in Proconsularis and the other provinces of the Vandal kingdom. Huneric exiled all Catholic bishops and many other clergy and tried to convert many of them. By the time Huneric died, it appears from Victor that his efforts had had much effect, though without succeeding in absorbing the Catholic Church.

Under Gunthamund the bishops remained in exile and their churches closed for another nine years. These years of absence must have had a serious effect upon the African Catholic Church as a whole. The brief respite given to the Catholic hierarchy at the end of Gunthamund's reign was not to last long into Thrasamund's reign, at least for the Church in Byzacena (and later probably elsewhere), since the Church in that province had taken it upon itself to elect new bishops to vacant bishoprics despite a royal prohibition, and all new bishops were exiled to Sardinia, including Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe. Thrasamund seems to have used a combination of persuasion and force to convert some Catholics.

Political circumstances meant that there was little threat of retaliation from overseas until the last years of Thrasamund's reign, when the Chalcedonian Emperor Justin succeeded in 518. It may have been

after this time that Thrasamund began to show a more conciliatory attitude towards the Catholics and invited Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe, to answer questions on his faith. Thrasamund may have been seeking a dialogue with the Catholics in his kingdom in response to renewed imperial interest in the fortunes of the Catholic Church in Africa. Also, increasing Moorish pressure on the frontiers of the kingdom may have made a rapprochement with the predominantly Catholic population more urgent. However, with the dismissal of Fulgentius, who may have made more of an impact in Carthage than the king had expected, Thrasamund reverted, perhaps now more urgently, to persuading or forcing Catholics to convert.

The succession of Hilderic did indeed bring with it the return of freedom of worship to the Catholics. The Catholic Church took the opportunity to put its house in order, though in the course of doing so it revealed internal divisions as well as solidarity. Gelimer's reign can have had no long-term effect before the Byzantine reconquest of Africa in 533.

It can be seen then that the Vandal attempt to oppress the Catholics was not uniform whether diachronically or geographically. A cleric in Carthage might view Vandal policy as one of more or less sustained persecution; but for a cleric in Byzacena it may have been only occasional and directed at those considered treasonous or troublesome. Catholic laypeople in Byzacena were only very rarely likely to suffer violence. By the end of the Vandal period they may indeed have

been more concerned about the threats from the Moors than from the Vandals.

The various Catholic writings investigated exhibit a variety of responses to the Vandals and their faith reflecting the confusion that the Vandal invasion must have brought about. It seemed to some that the suffering of Romano-African Catholics was a result of their sins. Some authors expressed great despair and pessimism. Apocalyptic attitudes suggested that there was more suffering to come and that the Arians presaged or even represented Antichrist. Some writers adopted a more optimistic approach, considering that faith would continue to spread through persecution or that barbarian kings might convert.

However, the dominant tone in most writings is a militant one. The primary concern of these writers was to bolster and confirm the faith of their audience, and to counter any negative reactions that might have weakened the faith of their flock. Even if the Vandals were the instruments of God's anger, they were not a chosen people but the precursors of Antichrist intent on crushing the Catholics and leading their souls to eternal damnation. If honour was due to the king, fear was due to God: both Fulgentius and the sermon *De Tempore Barbarico* 1 cited 1 Peter 2:17. As Fulgentius was to make clear in *Ad Thrasamundum*, to fear the king equally was to diminish the King of kings, which was what the Arians did.

These Catholic writers turned against the Arians the same arguments against rebaptism that their predecessors, such as Optatus of

Milev and Augustine, had used against the Donatists, a regular slogan being 'One God, one faith, one baptism' (Ephes. 4:5); to duplicate baptism was to divide the faith. Another connected argument that had been used against the Donatists was reused against the Arians, namely that of the universality of the Catholic Church the unity of the Church was also representing the unity of the Trinity. The communion with local churches throughout the Roman world *ipso facto* demonstrated the truth of the faith held by all these churches - that is the Nicaean faith. In response the Arians called Catholics *homousiani* and themselves sought contact with other Arian Churches. However, the more extensive network of communion across the Mediterranean which the African Church must have continued to enjoy, in theory, if not always in practice, was a useful weapon against the geographically-limited Arian Church. The legitimate defender of the Catholics was, of course the Roman emperor, and such a claim to religious allegiances which extended far beyond the boundaries of the Vandal kingdom implied corresponding political allegiances. Huneric was understandably concerned that Catholic bishops should not send letters abroad. Even in times of schism African Catholics were concerned to maintain these empire-wide contacts.

The desire to make the plight of African Catholics known throughout the Mediterranean and especially to the emperor was a motive common to several authors whose writings survive such as Victor of Vita and the author of the *Vita Fulgentii* and, probably, the author of the *Liber de Promissionibus* and must have been a major preoccupation of many exiled clerics. Authors such as Victor were concerned to represent those who had suffered at the hands of the Arians as heroes and martyrs,

partly, no doubt, to counter adverse reports which told against the resolve of African Catholics but also to strengthen that resolve and to provide examples to follow.

Vandal kings were also concerned about preachers who mentioned biblical tyrants in their sermons, since they feared that such references could be construed as referring to the kings themselves - the Vandals were concerned about the power of rhetoric and the use of biblical imagery by Catholic clerics. We know from surviving sermons and other writings that such parallels were indeed employed, even if in a veiled manner. Considering the ascerbic language and stark imagery of many of the anti-Arian writings and the nature of their contents, it would not be surprising that many writers might have preferred to remain anonymous.

In the face of powerful and oppressive temporal rulers, these Catholic writers adopted the image of the humble, suffering Church, which confirmed that this was the true Church and so would win in the end.

The Catholic leaders wished their followers to combat the Arian threat by a fearless and unswerving maintenance of their belief and by an accurate defence of their faith according to Catholic teachings. Fulgentius summed up the necessary attitude when he stated that not to assert faith is to deny it. It was essential in such circumstances that a Christian was 'always ready to reply to those questioning you on the reason for the faith and hope you have in you' (1 Peter 3:15).

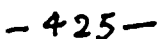
Fulgentius had spoken before Thrasamund 'of God's testimonies in the sight of kings and not been confounded' (Ps. 118:46), and to make sure that others could respond frankly about their faith, Fulgentius and many other Catholic writers compiled works designed to teach their readers how to oppose the arguments of Arians concerning the Trinity; citations from the Scriptures were used as the basic 'legal' texts to counter the arguments of their opponents. Anti-Arian writings were designed to inform and educate a great variety of audiences and came in a number of forms. The leaders of the Catholic Church showed themselves able to arm themselves rapidly against Arianism by teaching and polemic, just as they were able to do later against the opponents of the Three Chapters and had done earlier against Manicheans and Donatists. Polemical technique was an important key to their survival.

Catholic writers of the Vandal period also concerned themselves with other subjects. As well as repeating arguments against such traditional targets as Jews, Manicheans and Donatists, we have some writings by Vigilius of Thapsus and Fulgentius which dealt with the christological controversies that were raging in the east. Fulgentius also wrote in defence of Augustine's teachings on predestination and grace.

Indeed, Fulgentius' teachings throughout his writings were very much a reiteration of Augustine's teachings on many subjects such as baptism and marriage. Fulgentius usually wrote in response to requests for answers to queries on various religious subjects. His great skill was his ability to disseminate, explain and make widely known the

teachings of the African Fathers in a form in which they could be readily understood by their audience. We have evidence of Fulgentius' eloquence both in writing and speaking. He had the skills not only of teaching but also of pleasing and persuading, all of which were necessary to teach effectively, and he was apparently able to communicate with both popular and learned audiences. Fulgentius' eloquence was very much in demand. At a time when the organisation of the Catholic Church had been much weakened by exile of bishops and Vandal attempts to convert both clerics and laity, such skills in communication were an essential bond helping to maintain the solidarity of the Church hierarchy and its links with the laity. Such skills and popularity allowed Fulgentius to transcend the hierarchical structure of the Church, making his advice of paramount importance within the *concilium Byzacenum* and causing him to act *in loco parentis* for the people of Carthage when they lacked a bishop of their own. Fulgentius was hardly typical, embodying all that was considered to be best about African Catholics of the Vandal period being a nobleman of ancient Romano-African illustrious stock turned monk and then bishop, as well as an able defender of the faith who had defended African doctrine Vandal period. He can only have made African Catholics more aware of their own identity and hence loathe to compromise on that identity whoever held secular power.

KANDAL INVASION



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